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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY GERMANIC STUDIES

I

GOTTFRIED KELLER AS A DEMOCRATIC IDEALIST

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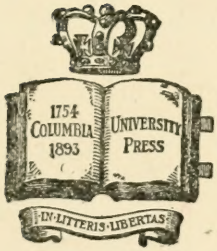
GOTTFRIED KELLER AS A DEMOCRATIC IDEALIST

BY
EDWARD FRANKLIN HAUCH



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ABBREVIATIONS

I—X. Gottfried Kellers Gesammelte Werke. Cotta, Stuttgart und Berlin.

Baechtold I—III. Gottfried Kellers Leben, etc.

Nach. Sch. Gottfried Kellers Nachgelassene Schriften und Dichtungen.

PREFACE

Gottfried Keller, as an author well worthy of a closer acquaintance, was first brought to my attention while I was still an undergraduate at Toronto. But for lack of the intellectual background necessary for the full appreciation of Keller's work, or for whatever reason, my interest in it during the succeeding years did not take me beyond a few of the best and most widely known of his works, and did not result in a closer study of them until the suggestion of Professor Calvin Thomas directed my attention once more specifically to this field. Aside from the literary and artistic quality of Keller's work and the content in general, it was at first largely the pedagogical element in it that attracted my interest. To Professor Thomas I owe further suggestions that directed my specific studies into somewhat broader channels. I also owe not a little in this respect to Mr. Carl Brands of the Dickinson High School of Jersey City.

To the late Dr. Emil Cherbuliez of Zürich I owe much for his kindly interest and encouragement during my stay in Zürich in the summer of 1914 in connection with this study.

To Professor Emil Ermatinger of Zürich I am indebted for one or two valuable incidental hints and suggestions. That the debt is no greater than it is, is wholly due to the fact that military duties called him away at the very time when ordinarily he would have been most at leisure to assist me in gaining access to some valuable manuscript material; nor did I have the inclination to encroach further on what scant leisure he may still have had at "a horribly barbarous and uncanny time," when one certainly had reason to feel "how the crisis in the great world disturb and hinder the private individual in his obscurity."[1]

I further wish to express my appreciation of the kindness and consideration extended towards me by Professor Rem

[1] Keller's letter to Ludmilla Assing, February 9, 1859. Baechtold II, pp. 427, 428.

and the other men at Columbia under whom I pursued my graduate studies, not always, I may say, under the most favorable circumstances.

To Mr. Charles Hale of Rutgers College and to Mr. Ned Johnson of New Brunswick, N. J., I wish to acknowledge my gratitude for substantial assistance in reading proof.

In the metrical renderings of the citations from Keller's poetry my main purpose has been to convey the content as accurately as possible. At the same time I have also tried to preserve as much as possible the flavor of freshness and virility that characterizes the original. As historical data for the purpose of the present study the earlier texts are of course the more valuable, and, as a matter of fact, some of the revisions made for the "Collected Works" do not seem to me to surpass the older texts very much as poetry.

INTRODUCTION

Democratic Tendencies in Nineteenth Century German Literature; Gottfried Keller's Relation to these; his Significance in the Literature of the Century; Brief Sketch of his Life

The growth of political democracy in Germany in the nineteenth century is, in a general way, paralleled by a corresponding development in the literature of the period. The breaking out of the French Revolution had promised the fulfilment of much for which the younger men of letters in Germany had hoped and striven during the two decades which preceded it. The excesses and horrors with which the Revolution was consummated brought disappointment and disillusionment to these idealists. The inevitable reaction expressed itself in the literature of the early Romanticists, whose work in the main was the continuation of that which Herder had begun or suggested. The despotism of Napoleon gave rise to the great liberation movement in Germany, and in this movement the younger generation at least set its hope for a purified and enlightened democracy, for a freer Europe with freer institutions of government. The Congress of Vienna and the foundation of the Holy Alliance soon blasted this hope, and for literature, philosophy, and art generally, the inevitable disillusionment expressed itself in the later Romanticism; in the search for solace from the hopelessness of the present in the romantic glories of Medievalism, the rich profusion and tantalizing remoteness of the Orient, and a Wordsworthian nature-cult.

The attitude of Romanticism was, in the main, one of aristocratic aloofness from the world of everyday affairs. It was in style and technic only, or rather in the wilful neglect of artistic technic and the standards and conventions hitherto supposed fundamentally essential to art, that Romanticism showed any marked democratic tendencies. It was impossible or at least unsafe to rebel against political reaction and oppression. The

spirit of revolt had to find expression for the time at least in a way less offensive to the ruling political authorities.

But the fetters of political repression were too galling to be long forgotten in the realm of fancy and romanticism. The younger generation again began to turn to things actual and present. For the Young Germany of the period, the ultimate happiness of the race was conditioned on its emancipation from political and social repression. What Max Koch says of Heine is undoubtedly true, more or less, of much of the propaganda carried on by these writers: "Not the truth, only the effect, is what counts; not to convince is the object, but to cast off with irresistible ridicule every conviction as disturbing and burdensome."[1]

The gradual and by no means uniform expansion of institutional and political democracy after 1848 was not accompanied by a proportionate or immediate disappearance from the earth of the evils it was supposed to combat. There was a growing realization that imperfect political institutions were not the only, and not necessarily the fundamental causes of the evils of society. Man-made institutions no longer formed the main point of attack in the literature of the period. The attempt to get a little closer to an understanding of humanity itself developed into the scientific or pseudo-scientific realism, the ideal of which is to get at the facts and present them faithfully and fully, regardless of the consequences. The propagandists of the preceding period had carefully, and not always without unscrupulousness, selected their facts with definite ends in view. Full democracy in literature came only with the realists and their intended or actual catholicity of outlook.

All three of these main nineteenth century tendencies, romantic, propagandist, and realistic, are represented in the works of Gottfried Keller. This is not merely true in the sense that his earlier works betray the romanticist and his later ones essentially the realist. In Keller these three main currents, in diverse aspects and varying proportions, to be sure, flow along pretty uniformly side by side throughout. He is at one and the same time romanticist, propagandist, realist and idealist.

[1] Vogt and Koch: "Geschichte der deutschen Literatur," II, p. 426.

Nor did the co-existence in Keller of tendencies in some aspects so much at variance with one another produce permanently or for long the conflict of soul, the "Zerrissenheit," that might have been expected. His realism is a part of his fundamentally democratic and catholic attitude of mind. And so fundamental was this attitude of mind that even the essentially romantic in his character was more and more dominated by it and made subservient to it.

Keller himself did not consciously aim to be the exponent of this, that, or the other particular school or cult. As a matter of fact, he had a supreme contempt for all categorical classification in literature and art generally. Adolf Frey is authority for the statement:[1] "It goes without saying that our conversation turned largely to literature and art. He did not avoid such discussions as soon as he found that he could take for granted on the part of his interlocutor an intelligent appreciation of such things, or at least an honest interest in them. To be sure, he was very much inclined to brevity in this field, and was thoroughly opposed to minute critical or esthetic study and discussion. In reference to his own person and works, anything that savored of expert and academic wisdom was abhorrent to him, and he studiously avoided all such catch-words as pessimism, romanticism, etc. To be sure, he most sincerely and most indefatigably strove for the understanding of art and its technic, and examined systems of esthetics and such things with attention. But he never lost sight of the fact that only that art-critic is of any account who in each individual case knows what is really and fundamentally essential, and what is really beautiful and poetic. . . . He applied fully to literary criticism what he once said of that of the plastic arts: 'All connoisseurs, dilettants and academic critics neither inspire, nor can anything be learned from them.'[2] In short he had a very low estimate of the value and the effect of literary criticism, and once said to me: 'As a matter of fact, telling people what is good is a doleful business if they themselves cannot see it.'"

[1] In his "Erinnerungen an Gottfried Keller," *Deutsche Rundschau*, LXIX, p. 103.
[2] "Ein bescheidenes Kunstreischen." *Neue Zurcher Zeitung*, March 22 and 23, 1882.

And yet, such terms as pessimism, romanticism, realism and the rest, have their very real value in literary criticism. By means of them, provided they are applied with some degree of uniformity of connotation, a great deal of cumbersome and confusing circumlocution can often be avoided in arriving at an intelligent estimate of the literary or philosophical significance of the author under consideration. Technical nomenclature of any kind is, as it were, the algebra of language, and it would be just as inconvenient and absurd to banish it from the language of literary criticism as from the science of mathematics. It shall not be the purpose of the present work to make Keller once and for all fit into any one of the categories of romanticist, propagandist or realist. But in tracing out his intimate affinity with all three of these main and vital currents of nineteenth century German literature, my main purpose is to show more clearly the development of his democratic thinking, and to define and outline his own peculiar type of democratic idealism in its various aspects, as reflected and revealed in his life and especially in his writings. Some aspects of Keller's literary activity which have a direct bearing upon this prominent phase of it are discussed more or less incidentally by his principal biographers and critics. Baldensperger and also Baechtold discuss to a certain extent the pedagogic significance of "Frau Regel Amrain und ihr Jüngster" and others of the Seldwyla tales, and outline pretty fully the political and social conditions out of which grew "Das Fähnlein der sieben Aufrechten" and "Martin Salander" respectively; and in discussing these works they necessarily bring out the reaction of these social and political conditions upon Keller's thought. But what appears to me to be of chief significance in his contribution to nineteenth century literature and thought is his uncompromisingly democratic attitude of mind in all things, coupled with an indestructible idealism in his outlook upon life. On the one hand he had a clear and catholic vision for things as they are; on the other, he had the power of extracting from the crude facts of life their poetic and vital significance. This phase of Keller's thought as revealed in his writings, has not been worked out with any degree of completeness heretofore.

so far as the present work does this, it can claim to be an ginal contribution to the literature of literary research.

o Keller the fame he justly deserves came very slowly. On occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of his birth he had long e published most of the very best of his lyrics, the greatest is longer prose fictions, and some of the very finest of his chless short stories. Yet, outside of his native Switzer- l, where his fellow-citizens of Zürich tendered him a great tion, the occasion elicited scarcely any public notice whatso- r. The great mass of the reading public throughout the Ger- n Empire knew very little of him. But twenty years later, he occasion of his seventieth birthday, all this had changed. glect and indifference on the part of the reading public of e Empire had given way to an almost unparalleled love and husiasm. Addresses and honors, not only from his fellow- ntrymen, but from enthusiastic admirers all over the Em- , were showered upon the aged invalid, whose precarious e of health prevented him from fully enjoying all these rated tributes to his real greatness. When told that the name the great von Moltke headed the list of his Berlin admirers, is reported to have said with the touching modesty so aracteristic of him: "Just as if I were a distinguished ntleman!"

Since then his popularity in Germany has anything but ninished. His books are not only talked about, but very dely read. Literary historians and critics give him a very gh place in the literature of the century. Max Koch desig- tes him and Fritz Reuter as the greatest humorists in the erature of Germany. Richard Moritz Meyer calls him he greatest creative genius in our literature since Goethe."

Keller was not a voluminous writer, and of the small but oice body of his works, only a comparatively small part has en translated into English: three of the Seldwyla stories by te Freiligrath Kroeker [1]; two more of the same series, two

[1] "Clothes Maketh Man and other Swiss Stories." Translation and critical Introduction by Kate Freiligrath Kroeker. London, 1894.

of the "Zürich Tales" and a few poems are translated in recently published "German Classics of the Nineteenth Twentieth Centuries."[1] His work remains for the most quite unknown to the English reader, tho if Turgenieff Daudet can be read in English with adequate enjoym it is hard to understand why Keller could not. In of the fact that he is so little known in English, it may be out of place here to add a brief sketch of his life. A introduction to Keller for the English reader, the brief excellent "Memoir" which accompanies the Kroeker tr lations will be found very helpful.

Gottfried Keller was born in Zürich, July 19, 1819. father, Rudolf Keller, a turner by trade, had been a ma high intelligence, imbued with a thirst for knowledge and s improvement and had shown throughout his short life g interest in popular education and the improvement of masses generally. His laudable projects for the material intellectual advancement of himself and those associated him were cut short by death in 1824 at the early age of thi three. Keller's mother was the daughter of a country surg Johann Heinrich Scheuchzer, of Glattfelden. Her extreme gality made it possible to maintain herself and her two child Gottfried and a younger daughter, Regula, in some degre modest comfort with the very slender means left by the fatl But she was scarcely of the mental and temperamental cali to cope adequately with the peculiarities and idiosyncracie the young Gottfried. Regula had all of her mother's talent frugality and industry with very little of her motherly ten ness. This made her but an indifferent companion later the somewhat irascible and solitary Keller in his old Gottfried, as he grew up, displayed all of his father's in lectual and artistic ambitions, but he lacked almost wholly father's acute sense for business management and a w ordered mode of life.

[1] For additional translations see bibliography.

deference to the democratic educational ideals of the
r, and by no means wholly on account of the modest means
mother, the boy Keller began his formal school education
school for the poor," an institution in which his father had
a great interest and of which at the time of his death he
een one of the administrators. From 1831 to 1833 he
ded the "Landknabeninstitut," and by October, 1833,
s ready to enter the "Industrial School" of his native
But his career in this institution was destined to be a
one. While by no means a vicious boy, he did not fit
nugly into the ordinary rut of common school discipline.
ork during the few months spent in this school seems to
een creditable enough; some of his teachers seem to have
t a good deal of him; others had no understanding what-
r the somewhat eccentric lad's independence of tempera-
his silent, brooding habits, and his unwillingness to be
overawed by anything. Involved in a boisterous
stration on the part of the pupils against an unpopular
lmittedly inefficient teacher, he was expelled from the
in the summer of 1834. Keller always maintained, not
t bitterness, that he was by no means the only or even
st guilty party in the affair; and yet he was the only one
o suffer for it. Thus the state schools of his native city
losed forever to him, and his widowed mother did not
the means to provide adequately for his education in
other way. For a time he tried to keep pace with his
r classmates by private study, but this plan soon lan-
ed, as was only to be expected under the circumstances.
was at this time that the youthful Keller determined to
landscape-painting his career. Again really helpful guid-
nd instruction were lacking. It is a question whether the
kind of master could have been found for him in Zürich
s time even if he had had the means to pay for adequate
ction. After he had learned all he could from one
r who was a charlatan and from another who was rather
than on the mere verge of insanity, he resolved to go to
h. There he hoped to find an environment more con-
to his art than was to be found among the hard-headed

philistines of his native Zürich. By the sale of a small i
mony which had been in the family for centuries, he wa
abled to make at least a beginning in Munich; and as f
future, he hoped soon to be able to make his own way
art. But Keller was not built for an early or a noisy suc
anything. Conditions in Munich at this time were no
encouraging or helpful to one who had chosen land
painting as his field. To make matters worse, the as
young artist presently saw grim want staring him in th
and a long illness still further complicated matters.
mittances which his mother sent him from time to tim
which she managed to procure for him only by the e
of the most rigid and almost tragic economy on her par
scarcely sufficient to cover the debts which had piled up
intervals. On one occasion he remained in bed two
days because he was hungry and had no money with w
buy food. At another time he colored flagstaffs for
tradesman to whom he had already sold or pawned mo
artistic sketches and studies, besides other personal belo
At last he yielded to the entreaties of his mother and re
to Zürich toward the close of 1842.

During the next six years, which Keller spent in his
city, painting gradually receded into the background
activities, and lyrical production took its place. In
stipend from the government of Zürich enabled him to
up in a measure at the University of Heidelberg what h
lost in formal education by his early expulsion from s
All this will be treated more fully in the succeeding ch
The two years spent in Heidelberg were among the happi
Keller's life.

One of the reasons which induced him in 1850 to leav
delberg for Berlin was because he thought the larger city
better serve the furtherance of the dramatic projects
now had begun to occupy him. But the drama proved
as much of an *ignis fatuus* as landscape-painting, a
Berlin experiences were in general a repetition of th
Munich: poverty, gradual isolation, largely due to K
unsocial habits of solitary brooding, and a tangle of

While he did not then or even afterwards produce any finished dramatic work, he did attain at least some measure of success in the field of prose fiction, tho it was many years before his work in this field received the recognition it deserves. It was during his stay in Berlin that he completed and published his greatest novel, "Der grüne Heinrich," and collected most of the material for the first volume of the Seldwyla tales which appeared soon after his return to Zürich. Other projects, which were worked out or published much later, were conceived and partly worked out in Berlin.

His Zürich friends and admirers finally paid his debts for him, and after some time, with some additional financial assistance from his mother, he was induced to return to Zürich. Efforts had already been made to procure for him some regular employment, a professorship in the philosophical faculty of the "Polytechnikum" had been suggested. But Keller displayed no great enthusiasm at the prospect of having to prepare and deliver a stipulated number of regular routine lectures on the history of literature or art, nor did he consider himself at all fitted for the work. That his reluctance to accept a professorship was not wholly due to aversion to regular hours and mechanical routine is evidenced by the fact that by 1861 he was ready to accept with alacrity an appointment which involved no end of patient drudgery, that of Chief Clerk for the Canton of Zürich. It was by no means a sinecure, and as the event proved, Keller had not the slightest inclination to turn it into one. At first the appointment of this somewhat irresponsible poet to a position of such importance in the state was severely critized in certain quarters. But to the surprise and delight of his friends and the discomfiture of his opponents, he made good; and for fifteen years he filled the office with a degree of efficiency of which not even his best friends had thought him capable.

By 1876 the steadily increasing sale of his works made it safe for him to think of laying aside an office which was certainly not furthering his literary productivity very much, but which had at any rate given him that solid standing among his fellow-citizens which is so necessary to the happiness of a

man of Keller's democratic character. He accordingly resigned his office and spent the remaining years of his life in literary activity exclusively.

Naturally the fifteen years of official drudgery had not been very rich in literary output. What there was, however, is among the very best of Keller's work. The same year he assumed office there had appeared "Das Fähnlein der sieben Aufrechten"; in 1872 the "Sieben Legenden" were published, and in 1874, the second volume of the Seldwyla stories, one of which, "Die misbrauchten Liebesbriefe," had already been published in 1865. In 1878 appeared the "Züricher Novellen"; in 1879-80 the new version of "Der grüne Heinrich"; in 1882, "Das Sinnegedicht"; "Martin Salander" in 1886. The collected works also include two volumes of poems.

Keller's mother lived just long enough to see the better day dawning upon the fortunes of her son. She died in 1864. Keller never married, and after the death of the mother it was the sister Regula who conducted his household, for the most part with rather more frugality than was absolutely necessary or convenient to the brother. On the whole she was, however, very careful of his physical wants, tho she did not possess the mentality that would have made her a congenial companion to her gifted brother. She died in 1888. The closing years of Keller's life, tho by no means unhappy, were somewhat solitary. His fertile mind was still teeming with unfinished projects when death finally claimed him, after a long and tedious illness, on the fifteenth of July, 1890.

CHAPTER I

Keller and the Political Propagandism of the Forties; Early Poetry; Political Activity; Political Ideals

Keller was wont to regard the years spent in his native Zürich after his return from Munich in 1842 until his removal to Heidelberg in 1848 as lost years.[1] But in reality these years were by no means lost; it was during this period that he gradually turned away from painting and found his true artistic sphere in literature, and all this without fixed conscious purpose on his own part or guidance from without.

On his return from Munich it had been his purpose to continue his chosen vocation of painting, for he thought that relief from actual want would enable him to work with less hampered mind. But if he had found it difficult in Munich to make satisfactory progress in his art without adequate guidance and direction, he now found it no less so in his native Zürich. The diary he kept for the five weeks beginning July 3, 1843, gives ample proof of his melancholy isolation at this time. Finding little inspiration for painting, Keller spent a great deal of time in reading his favorite authors: Goethe, Jean Paul, E. T. A. Hoffman, among others. It was also at this time that the poems of his contemporaries, Anastasius Grün and Georg Herwegh, fell into his hands. Of the effect Keller says:[2] "One morning as I lay in bed I opened the first volume of Herwegh's poems and read. The new ring seized me like a trumpet-blast which suddenly wakes to life a vast camp of armed hosts. During those same days the book 'Schutt' by Anastasius Grün fell into my hands; and now a rhythmic life began to pulsate in every fibre, so that I had all I could do to acquire rapidly some knowledge of poetics, and to hold and bring to order the mass of unformed verse which I poured forth by the day and by the hour."

[1] See Baechtold I, p. 193.

[2] Nach. Sch. pp. 18, 19. Also *Die Gegenwart*, 1876-1877, Vol. X, No. 51 and Vol. XI, No. 1.

The political unrest which at this time prevailed throughout the whole of Europe had its own peculiar phase in republican and democratic Switzerland. Karl Dändliker characterizes the situation as follows:[1] "The question was whether and in what way the people were to be granted greater power over the state, especially over the legislative function, a question which necessarily grew out of the principle of popular sovereignty set up in 1830. It was only natural that much that was irrelevant and reprehensible should attach itself to this. The still unsolved question of constitutional revision was an additional keynote to the political activities of the forties.

"A decisive factor was the readjustment in the political parties. The more the moderates weakened and were crowded out by zealous radicals, the more the conservative elements felt themselves challenged. Toward the end of the thirties, matters had reached the point where almost everywhere the middle parties disappeared and only the extreme elements were prominent in the conflict. In the heat of passion conservatives and radicals resorted to force in order to gain control, and the time came which is called characteristically enough that of the *Putsche*.[2]"

There grew up among the radicals the desire to liberalize and reform the state church. In Zürich this movement culminated early in 1839 in the call of Dr. David Friedrich Strauss to the chair of Christian dogma at the University. The opposition on the part of the conservatives was so violent that Strauss was almost immediately retired, but the strife continued with unabated bitterness; and the radical régime in Zürich came to an end, for the time being, not many months after, and not without outbreaks of violence and loss of life.

This was an encouragement for conservative agitators and malcontents in the neighboring cantons, where the régime of radicalism in many cases had degenerated into high-handed oppression of the opposition. Catholic Luzern had already

[1] Dr. Karl Dändliker: "Geschichte der Schweiz," Zürich, 1895. Vol. III, pp. 617, 618.

[2] A term applied to the armed raids by means of which one party tried on various occasions to frustrate the purposes of the other. A *Putsch* is a very sudden and heavy shower characteristic of the vicinity of Zürich in the summer.

made attempts at closer alliances with the other Catholic and reactionary cantons. She now further complicated matters by taking steps for the recall of the Jesuits, who were to be given charge of ecclesiastical and educational matters. This met with violent opposition and protest from the more radical cantons. The radicals of Luzern and of the neighboring cantons on two occasions resorted to demonstrations of force, the so-called "Freischaren." But Luzern by the fall of 1845 had completed the Jesuit program. By June of the following year, she all but completed her secret negotiations for a closer alliance among the Catholic cantons. When the real nature and purpose of this "Sonderbund" became known, feeling ran very high. A counter league of the Protestant cantons was formed and war broke out. In November, 1847, the Sonderbund was defeated and measures were finally taken for the complete revision of the constitution of the Confederacy.

In all this, and most of all in the earlier part of the struggle, the young Keller was a passionate radical. He at this time associated a good deal with a group of artisans, some of whom had been friends of his father, and all of whom were of pronounced democratic and radical tendencies in politics. These were the men whom Keller later immortalized in his "Fähnlein der sieben Aufrechten." When the "Strausssputsch" broke out, he was on a vacation with his uncle at Glattfelden. He immediately hastened to Zürich to take active part in support of the tottering radical régime. In his diary under date of August 5 and 6, 1843, he notes the following:[1]

"The iron arm of the time grips me. A very volcano rages and seethes within me. I am plunging into the struggle for complete independence and freedom of the intellect and religious opinions." He expresses some compunction at assailing the ancient faith of the people and then continues: "In the meantime, regardless of incidental differences, I shall attach myself to the propaganda; for sooner would I see no faith prevail, than black, choking, deadening, religious coercion.

[1] Baechtold I, pp. 211, 212, 213.

. . . In the evening I was received into the society of the 'Union Fédérale' and took a lively part in a discussion as to the attitude we Swiss ought to assume toward the new propaganda in Germany. All the participants committed themselves emphatically to varying shades of liberal-mindedness. The 'Union Fédérale' is a society of young men who meet regularly for mutual improvement, and in order to clear and strengthen their views and judgment, especially with regard to the questions of the day."

Keller also took part in some less innocent activities of the time, the armed demonstrations of the "Freischaren" against the Jesuit program of Luzern, which he later described with so much humor in "Frau Regel Amrain und ihr Jüngster."

In the first poem by Keller which was printed,[1] he attacks the Jesuits with a vigor which almost amounts to scurrility. Other anticlerical and patriotic poems, also lyrics of love and nature, followed in various periodicals, and Keller began to enjoy a certain local reputation as a poet. Some at least of these poems of love and nature date back in their origin to the years preceding their author's stay in Munich. A number of these in form and treatment remind one at once of Heine. Keller presently conceived the idea of publishing a collection of these poems in book form, with a view to gaining funds for further study, possibly again in Munich. He first applied to Julius Froebel, editor of *Der schweizerische Republikaner*. Froebel referred him to the German political refugee and literary Maecenas, Adolf Ludwig Follen, then living in Zürich. Keller found favor in his eyes, and through him soon came in contact with Herwegh, Wilhelm Schulz, Freiligrath and others of the colony of German literary and political refugees who from time to time or permanently found asylum in Zürich. These men recognized in Keller not only a poet of considerable promise but a kindred spirit with strong Young Germany tendencies. Encouraged by these men and actively

[1] "Sie kommen, die Jesuiten," printed in a supplement to *Die freie Schweiz*, Feb. 3, 1844. The same subject is treated in humorous vein in a satirical farce directed against Jesuits and reactionaries. As printed in Baechtold, it bears the date c. 1846. Baechtold II, pp. 490-495.

assisted by Follen, he found the way opened for the publication of a collection of his poems in the *Deutsches Taschenbuch* of 1845. This was followed by a still larger collection in the *Taschenbuch* of the following year.[1] A little later in the same year these same poems were included in a collection published as a separate volume, the "Gedichte" of 1846.

Many of these poems are strongly anticlerical, as for example the Jesuit poem already mentioned. Others attack monarchical institutions with equal vehemence, as for example "Frau Michel," in which is depicted with a strange mingling of satire and pathos the poor, ignorant peasant woman in her stubbornly foolish and benighted loyalty to a sovereign who has robbed her of her only son. It ends with the lines:

> The devil make an end of it! Enough of playful foolishness;
> How long will you, oh doting child, persist in silly mulishness?
> You stupid, stupid Dame Michel![2]

Of the same type is the poem of the tall cuirassier who begs for bread from the passer-by because, all his glittering tinsel notwithstanding, the king does not provide adequately for him:

> He whispers low, "I'm hungry; a penny, Sir, for bread!"
> I stop, amazed and troubled; my cheek for him grows red,
> The long, the strong, the glittering cuirassier![3]

Both these antimonarchical poems owe their origin to incidents and events that came under Keller's personal observation during his sojourn in Munich. "Dame Michel" goes back to the occasion of the marriage of the Crown Prince

[1] *Deutsches Taschenbuch. Erster Jahrgang.* Zurich und Winterthur, Verlag des literarischen Comptoirs. 1845. *Deutsches Taschenbuch. Zweiter Jahrgang.* Zurich, Julius Froebel u. Comp. 1846.

[2] Text of the 1846 edition:

> So schlage doch der Teufel drein! ich kann nicht mehr spassen und narren;
> Wie lange noch willst du, altes Kind! in deinem Dusel verharren?
> Du dummes Weib, Frau Michel!

See also "Frau Rösel," X, p. 46.

[3] Text of the 1846 edition;

> Er flüstert leis', mich hungert, ein Kreuzer, Herr, für Brot!
> Ich stehe still, erschrocken, und werde für ihn rot,
> Der schlanke, der blanke, der schwere Kuirassier!

Cf. X, p. 48.

which, in spite of the poverty of the people, was celebrated with great pomp and circumstance. Dame Michel spends her last farthing in decorations for her house, so that hers may not form a conspicuous and unpleasant contrast with those of her neighbors. It was the same occasion for which the improvident and impoverished young artist engaged in the manual labor of painting flagstaffs, as mentioned earlier. Of the occasion of "The Cuirassier" Baechtold says:[1] "Twice on Lark and Pigeon Street a cuirassier, coming out of the hospital, begged him for alms."

Even the nature poems are by no means free from this polemical tendency. The second poem in the series entitled "Evening" ends with the satirical lines:

> When God a potent thought conceives,
> "Sheet-lightning!" soft the whisper steals;
> Beware, oh rabble, when the flash
> What's in thy addled life reveals![2]

The third poem in the series "Night," describes a beautiful tropical island lying peacefully in the night until suddenly aroused from its idyllic slumber by the arrival of rapacious conquistadors, the ruthless emissaries of European culture. The last stanza once more expresses Keller's unforgiving anticlericalism:

> And foremost on the black ship's deck there stands,
> O'er-topping, blacker, all the lusting train,
> The priest of Christ, and with up-lifted hands
> He rears the bloody cross with God in pain.[3]

The "Neuere Gedichte" published in 1851 have very few poems of a pronounced political tendency. The time for words was over. The comparative absence of political propagandism

[1] Baechtold I, p. 111.

[2] Text of the 1846 edition almost identical with IX, p. 39.

[3] 1846 text:

> Zuvorderst aus des Schiffes schwarzen Wänden
> Ragt, schwärzer, aus der giererfüllten Rotte
> Der Christenpfaffe, schwingend in den Händen
> Das blut'ge Kreuz mit dem gequälten Gotte.

Cf. "Nachtfahrer," IX, p. 25.

in these poems can be ascribed to the feeling expressed by Keller in the sonnet, "After the Sonderbund War":

> In deepest shame my burning cheeks grow red
> As I bring tribute of an empty rime,
> And greet a people in its virile prime,
> Thro' deeds and valor late to victory led.
>
> The vibrant blows that on taut drum were shed,
> The trumpet's blare in deaf'ning tones sublime,
> Have better voiced the stern call of the Time
> Than all we windy prophets sang or said.
>
> The meanest, poorest watcher of the host,
> Who, stout of heart, his ready weapon bore,
> And in cold, starry night maintained his post,
>
> And each who struck one single blow at most
> Is now a king whom deeds acclaim far more
> Than all our idle poets' wordy boast.[1]

Keller elsewhere expressed great admiration for the dignity and reserve with which the Sonderbund War had been brought to a successful close. He contrasts it in this respect with the much noisier and much more pretentious, but also more juvenile and much less successful, revolutionary movement in southern Germany.[2] "How fine-grained and politically finished was

[1] The text of the 1851 version varies somewhat from that found in IX, p. 132:

> In tiefer Scham erglühen meine Wangen,
> Da ich mit dieser Reime leerem Beten
> Vor mein lebendig-kräft'ges Volk will treten,
> Das eben kommt von Tat und Sieg gegangen!
>
> Des Tamburs Schlägel, die im Wirbel sprangen,
> Der rauhste Tagruf gellender Trompeten:
> Sie gelten jetzo mehr, o ihr Propheten!
> Als Alles, was wir stolz und eitel sangen.
>
> Der letzte schlichte Wächter vor dem Heere,
> Der, Glut und Kraft im Herzen, hat getragen
> In kalter Sternennacht die blanke Wehre,
>
> Und Jeder, der nur einen Streich geschlagen,
> Ist nun ein König von *lebend'ger Ehre!*—
> Was soll da unser Singen noch und Sagen?

[2] Baechtold I, p. 319.

our whole Jesuit war in all its phases and relationships as compared to these colossal but immature upheavals!

"Even the fact that our people showed less contempt of death than almost all of these various cities speaks in their favor and is a proof (with no intention of chicanery on my part) of greater refinement of culture and the consciousness that matters shall and must come to a happy issue without the process being all too frenzied." The same attitude Keller expresses in a fragment of a farce printed in Baechtold.[1]

In spite of the sentiment of the sonnet quoted above and the apparent cynicism of the farce to which reference has just been made, Keller by no means, at this time or afterwards, ceased to take an active interest in the political, social and religious struggles going on about him. The articles he contributed from time to time to various periodicals and newspapers, as well as numerous passages in his more specifically literary works, testify abundantly to his continued and constant interest in the political affairs of his fatherland. As an example of his sane and well-balanced democracy, as revealed in these journalistic contributions, may be quoted the conclusion of the review of a book by Hans Lebrecht, "Three days in the Life of a Zürich Clergyman":[2] "Besides, in an apostrophe in which the author glorifies the free fatherland he says: 'From now on each counts for what he is really worth, and talent alone will receive recognition!' By talent he probably means merit; but as it stands, the statement is inadequate. In a free and happy state every member must have recognition as a citizen; talent, however, only in its proper place."

In February, 1857, Keller writes to his friend, Ludmilla Assing:[3] "The war cloud was, however, very beautiful and solemn here in our country, and we poor fools took it very

[1] Baechtold II, p. 495.

[2] *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*, Nr. 196. *Jahrgang*, 1848. "Drei Tage aus dem Leben eines Züricher Geistlichen." Ein geschichtlicher Roman für das Volk von Hans Lebrecht. Leipzig. Verlagsbureau. 1847.

The articles, however, which appeared in the *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*, Nr. 36-39, in 1847, and which Baechtold reprints (Vol. I. 453-460) as having been written by Keller, were in reality not by Keller at all, but by his friend Wilhelm Schulz, as Emil Ermatinger shows in *Das literarische Echo* for November 1, 1913.

[3] Baechtold II, p. 374.

seriously. As a matter of fact, it has advanced us considerably in our internal relationships, and if you meet his Majesty please thank his most exalted Person for that in my name! But for several months I got wholly out of touch with my work; for I wrote editorials, engaged in target practice, indulged in political drivel in the cafés and all such deviltries."

The reference is to the trouble between Switzerland and Prussia regarding the suzerainty of the latter over Neuchâtel. This trouble had for a time gravely menaced the very independence and national dignity of Switzerland. In 1713 Neuchâtel had been ceded to Prussia, had become a member of the Swiss Confederacy in 1815, but was at the same time still considered a principality under the suzerainty of Prussia. In 1848 it had revolted against Prussia, and in 1856 a counter-revolution of royalists had again brought on a serious crisis. The Confederacy had suppressed the uprising of the royalists, and it now insisted that the Prussian king yield his claim. So great was the unanimity and enthusiasm displayed on the part of the Swiss, that Prussia, at the instance of the other powers, finally yielded in the spring of 1857.

In all this Keller was fully in accord with the patriotic enthusiasm of his fellow-countrymen, and he himself fully shared in it. But in the newspaper activity, of which he speaks in the letter quoted above, he once more displays the reflective sobriety and common-sense which became more and more characteristic of his public utterances when danger threatened from without, or when there prevailed within the somewhat truculent little confederacy feverish political excitement, not always wholly free from passionate excesses and extravagances. In this spirit of sobriety and moderation he concludes a contribution to the *Eidgenössische Zeitung* of December 26, 1856, addressed to the Federal Assembly:[1] "When a man stands single-handed in the darkness of the night and feels how his enemies softly encircle him in order to strike at him, he may well wish for a single ray of light so that he may see where best to place his fist in defense of his life. This is the situation in which the Swiss nation is placed; and it appeals to you, its

[1] Nach. Sch., pp. 352, 353.

administrators, to give it this ray of light in that you do all in your power to keep the peace, all that true honor and absolute national independence permit. It is for you to show in the name of the Swiss people an unmistakably pacific attitude, and to do in the pursuit of this policy the utmost that is compatible with the honor and integrity of the Swiss. In doing this you will cast a bright light into the faces of the foreign aggressors, and their real intentions will stand unequivocally revealed. And from that moment when your efforts shall prove fruitless, we shall know that we must no longer pay heed to the assertions of the foreigner, but to our own might. . . . When you have taken council for the last time, and in vain, for peace, that same hour take council for war, and lead your people forth into that solemn and sacred school where all that life holds dear is seen and weighed according to its true and final worth!"

A conflict with Napoleon III over the neutrality of certain districts of Haute-Savoie had a less happy issue. In a letter to Freiligrath of April, 1860, he comments upon the situation as follows:[1] "That scoundrel in Paris has us in hot water at present. Unfortunately, it can scarcely be doubted that he proposes to curtail our territory. The Swiss people in their naïveté are fully resolved to fight the French if it should come to that. There may be a great and honorable task in store for Switzerland. There exists the greatest danger that the French with their notorious craft and trickery will muddle and draw out of the affair to such an extent that the propitious moment will be botched, which by the way is not yet the case. The occupation of northern Savoie would have been a veritable Austrian coup. Come what may, Bonaparte will not reap much happiness or profit from the business in any case. Hardly would he long outlive the independence and integrity of Switzerland." Keller elsewhere[2] had already expressed his distrust of Napoleon, and had designated him as an adventurer whose assurances were worth nothing: "We are living once more in a horribly barbarous and uncanny time. One begins

[1] Baechtold II, pp. 459, 460.

[2] Letter to Ludmilla Assing, February 9, 1859. Baechtold II, pp. 427, 428.

to doubt everything; and the whole world, open-mouthed, hangs upon the tricky speeches of one single man, and he an adventurer. It seems the ruling powers cannot even at this late day make up their minds to be noble and resolute while yet there is time, and thus save themselves from subsequent misery. I am very much wrought up over these matters; and I am beginning to appreciate the fact that a crisis in the great world can disquiet and hinder even the private individual in his obscurity."

The "propitious moment" of which Keller spoke was in reality botched in some way or other. Through the machinations of Napoleon the territory in question came fully and finally into the possession of France. There was considerable dissatisfaction throughout Switzerland with the public men who were held responsible for the failure of the negotiations. Among other public demonstrations, a meeting was called at Uster to give public expression to this dissatisfaction, and to organize a new party for the purpose of getting men into office who would be better fitted to guard the national honor and integrity against aggressions of this kind. The movement was a miserable failure; the new party did not succeed in electing a single candidate. Keller, who had taken an active part in it, says of his share in these activities:[1] "I was lately much occupied with political matters. I had allowed myself to be drawn into an agitation which had been started to vote several flabby and war-shy fellows out of the National Council. But the officialdom of Zürich took our little joke as an attack upon themselves and did their utmost to defeat it, so that we were knocked on the head pretty badly. I had played the rôle of manifesto-writer, and thereby drew upon myself the 'regret' of the powers that be. This 'regret' annoyed me, and I proceeded to change it through a series of newspaper articles into something more substantial, namely into hatred and anger, which will probably subside again presently." The reputation of a political agitator and malcontent which Keller thus got was not wholly undeserved. At the same time, as Baechtold indicates,[2] "Das Fähnlein der sieben Aufrechten" which appeared

[1] Letter to Ludmilla Assing, November, 1860. Baechtold II, p. 475.
[2] Baechtold II, p. 317.

at this time[1] might well have been taken as an expression of Keller's more genuine and deeper feeling of satisfaction with the conditions then prevailing in his fatherland. "Das Schillerfest auf dem Mythenstein"[2] and a longer article on the same subject, "Am Mythenstein,"[3] were likewise written in the same enthusiastically optimistic and patriotic spirit.

During the sixties the question of the revision of the constitution occasioned great unrest in the city and the canton of Zürich. In an article[4] in the *Sonntagspost* Keller confesses his lack of faith in constitutions made to order, and gives utterance to that somewhat mystic faith in the ultimate infallibility of the people in working out its own destiny successfully which recurs again and again throughout his writings:[5] "But a constitution is not a school exercise in stylistic attainments. The so-called logical, philosophical and beautiful constitutions have never enjoyed a long life. If such were of any use, those defunct republics would still exist which in their day ordered their constitutions from Rousseau because they had no people in whom the real constitutions lie dormant until the last moment. To us those constitutions seem the most beautiful in which one concrete fact, one wrested right, lies beside the other like the hard, glittering kernels in granite. And these are at the same time themselves the clearest record of their own historical evolution."

On the part of the radicals, who gradually gained the upper hand, the struggle was carried on by no means without bitter and unjust personalities. It was the time of the "States-General of Calumny" described in "Das verlorene Lachen." The public men in office under the old régime were savagely attacked; and Keller's sense of fairness and justice, as well as his lack of faith in formal paper constitutions, induced him to do what he could to stem the tide in spite of the fact that he was thereby jeopardizing the public position he was at that time

[1] In Berthold Auerbach's *Deutscher Volks-Kalender* for 1861. Afterwards included in the "Zuricher Novellen."

[2] *Augsburger allgemeine Zeitung* for October 26, 1860. Reprinted, Nach. Sch., pp. 339, 340

[3] *Morgenblatt für gebildete Leser* of April 2 and 9, 1861. Reprinted, Nach. Sch., pp. 34-69.

[4] Quoted in part in Baechtold III, pp. 4, 5, 6.

[5] Baechtold III, p. 6.

holding in the civil service. In keeping with this policy are the articles he wrote for the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* [1] in defense of the really great politician, statesman and financier, Alfred Escher, who had been grossly attacked for imputed political malpractice and intrigue by a certain Karl Walder in the *Winterthurer Landbote*. For all this activity in behalf of the old régime Keller fully expected to lose his office of Cantonal Clerk when the radicals came into power. Much to his surpise, however, the radicals retained him in office, and Keller would seem to have been one of the very few higher officials who came out of this campaign of calumny comparatively unscathed.

In general, his public office from 1861 to 1876 kept him from airing his opinions to any great extent in public with regard to the management of public affairs. But Adolf Frey is authority for the statement that he did not by any means extend this discretion to his private conversation when among his friends. The newspaper contributions, even after he retired from office, deal more and more with literary and artistic material. There are also occasional replies to attacks of various kinds upon Keller himself, as for example the one under the title: "A Persistent War of Vegeance," [2] in which he defends himself against the popular gossip with which he was worried from time to time for a number of years concerning a certain character in "Das verlorene Lachen." It was claimed, in spite of all assurances to the contrary, that in his portrayal of the pastor in this story he had in mind one of his contemporaries, a certain Pastor Lang, against whom he was said to have a grudge. As late as 1882, however, we find an article in the *Neue Zürcher-Zeitung* [3] which illustrates the almost pedantic minuteness with which Keller followed up the political affairs of the canton. It is a protest against the utter disregard for the exact truth which characterizes common electioneering practices. A democratic candidate, a certain Pastor Grob, had been characterized by one of his supporters as "of the people, for, and with the people" in

[1] *Neue Zürcher-Zeitung* of May 20 and November 9, 1866.
[2] *Neue Zürcher-Zeitung* of September 30, 1879.
[3] *Neue Zürcher-Zeitung* of July 31, 1882.

contrast to his opponent, the supposedly more aristocratic Escher. Keller takes exception especially to the phrase "of the people," and presents ample and exact data to prove his contention that Grob's lineage was fully as aristocratic as that of his opponent.

Keller thus illustrates throughout in many respects the typical Young Germany development: effusions of love-poetry and nature-poetry side by side with political propagandism; this propagandism later finds its outlet more and more in journalistic criticism on political, literary and artistic subjects.

As already indicated, these discussions of a political nature were by no means confined to his journalistic writings. His private correspondence, the fragmentary diaries, and autobiographical sketches contain much material of the same nature. Here, however, the tendency runs much more to discussion of general principles rather than specific instances. The specific instance merely gives the occasion for the more general observation. An examination of these passages will show that even the youthful Keller, passionate radical though he was, was by no means an unmitigated extremist. In his diary of July 10, 1843,[1] he makes mention of a certain journeyman-tailor, Weitling, an advocate of communism. This Weitling, through some of his public utterances, had made himself obnoxious to the authorities, and had been arrested, and sentenced to prison. Keller expresses disapproval of the high-handed manner in which this was done, but at the same time takes issue against the communism preached by Weitling, closing with the words: "If you demand an absolutely uniform education on the part of the state, provision for universal employment on the part of the state, universal provision for those incapacitated for work and for the helpless on the part of the state, then I am with you heart and soul!" He then continues: "But away with your really fanatical, world-storming notions! To the mad-house with you if you are really sincere, and to the devil if you are only thinking of your own fond stomachs!" A few days later we find

[1] Baechtold I, pp. 202, 203.

the following entry on the same subject:[1] "These communists are as if possessed. I have been wrangling with several of them for two hours. They were journeymen-tailors together with their employer, and a fellow with a ready tongue who had somewhat the appearance of a student. The tailors could not possibly be induced to come outside of their communism and its conceptions and examine it dispassionately from without. And when they could no longer express themselves, or when they gave themselves away, the scholar came quickly to the rescue, and with fluent tongue built up an edifice of which one had to admit almost every stone, as it were, and which in the end one could only pull down again with the words: 'But unfortunately it will and can not be!'" Here is already present in the ardent young radical that sanity and sobriety of judgment and that power of seeing clearly the things as they are which led some of his critics to see in "Martin Salander," because it was the product of Keller's old age, too much of reaction and pessimism.

The same clear-sightedness also characterizes Keller's attitude toward the expulsion from Switzerland of the German refugee Heinzen:[2] "The newspaper campaign in Switzerland was certainly no very noble affair; the expulsion, however, was not to be avoided. Heinzen has issued a pamphlet regarding it in which he reveals principles with regard to the rights of asylum which are totally false and biased. In practical matters he is just as tactless as Ruge. Especially does he forget that our governing bodies, as representatives of the Swiss people, in dealing with the other nations, have not the people themselves, but Messrs. Metternich & Co. to deal with. So long as these appear before us with their powers of attorney as guardians of their respective peoples, we must confine ourselves to them when business is to be done. And if they present all sorts of evil rubbish in their official program, we can only regret that their people do not dismiss them, but we cannot change it. Unfortunately of course, private individuals suffer by it, especially the refugees. To be sure we could

[1] Baechtold I, p. 208.
[2] Letter to Freiligrath, February, 1847. Baechtold I, p. 272.

say: 'Away with your demands; they are not within the compass of the laws of nations since your own people repudiate them, and among us liberty is in fashion!' But in that case we should have to have the guarantee that, in case of an armed intervention against Switzerland, the German liberals, deputies and people, would rise as one man and at least try to prevent it."

In much the same spirit of sane and sober reflection the three leading men in the government of Zürich at this time, Jonas Furrer, Prof. J. J. Rüttemann and Alfred Escher, became for Keller ideals of disinterested, democratic patriotism. Of their influence upon his political thinking he says in his diary of 1847:[1] "I owe these men a secret debt of deep gratitude. From a vague revolutionary and raider *à tout prix* I have learned to become through their example a sober and thoughtful human being who knows his own mind, who has a due regard for inflexible good form in political matters, and who insists that clarity should be joined to energy, the greatest degree of mildness and patience, which awaits the propitious moment, to courage and enthusiasm. I am convinced that with all this there will not be lost the enthusiasm and the power for courageous action necessary to break fetters once recognized as binding, or in other words, there will not be lost the sense for righteous and necessary revolution." He then expresses the opinion that revolutions will become more and more inadmissible and superfluous by the exercise of the right of free speech, and then goes on to say: "People always complain that antique virtue has departed, and at the same time we have in our very midst the most splendid examples of it, only in a modern garb." As instances he mentions Furrer who, at considerable financial sacrifice, gave up a lucrative legal practice to serve the city as burgomaster; Rüttemann, who was similarly situated; and Escher, of whom he says:[2] "The son of a millionaire, he subjects himself to the most arduous toil from morning to night, undertakes difficult and complex offices at an age at which other young men of twenty-five to twenty-eight years, if they

[1] Baechtold I, p. 302
[2] Baechtold I, pp. 303, 304.

possess his wealth, before all things else enjoy life. Of course people say he has ambitions. It may be; it only indicates a more pronounced personality. I for my part, even if I had received his education, would scarcely sit the whole day in an office if I had his money."

Among the "Collected Works of Gottfried Keller" those of greatest political significance are "Das Fähnlein der sieben Aufrechten" and "Martin Salander." Concerning the former he says in his brief autobiography of 1889:[1] "In Berlin he had also commenced the "Sieben Legenden" and now completed them at home. They were not published until 1872. Then he wrote a part of the later Seldwyla stories, and for Berthold Auerbach's *Popular Almanac* "The Company of the Upright Seven," a work which could serve as an expression of satisfaction with conditions in the fatherland and joy in the possession of the new constitution. It was the happy moment when one is not conscious of the inevitable consequences which follow in the wake of everything, and when one is wont to consider the world as good and perfect." The "Upright Seven" represent the old school of sober but uncompromising radicals to whose unceasing propaganda the reform in the constitution was largely due. Theirs was not the doctrinaire radicalism of the would-be philosophical theorists, the self-ordained leaders and teachers of the common people like Wilhelm Marr.[2] It was a radicalism growing out of the intelligent and practical good sense of the people themselves, chiefly the artisans and tradesmen of the better sort. These people knew what they wanted, and could be trusted to guard the liberties they had attained without abusing them. Keller takes good care to depict the seven as modest men who had no thought of personal glory or advantage, but who were perfectly content to work in obscurity and without special reward for the good of the cause

[1] Nach. Sch., p. 5. The brief sketch was written by Keller in the third person.

[2] See Baechtold I, pp. 320, 321. The correspondence in the *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung* which has already been mentioned as being wrongly ascribed by Baechtold I to Keller is directed against this Marr and his ilk. See Baechtold I, pp. 453-460.

which was dear to them. Not one of them ever held or sought public office. They are all types of Keller's ideal citizen.

Karl Hediger, the son of one of these seven champions of liberty, represents the younger generation. Better educational facilities have given him a clearer understanding of public questions and a broader outlook. But he has a thoro appreciation of the work the men of the older generation have accomplished and of their inestimable worth in the body politic. It is his ideal also to guard the rights they have obtained, nor is he at all ready to find fault with imperfections in their work. With a rising generation of this character the republic is secure.

It is in one of the assemblies of these seven champions that Keller puts into the mouth of one of them a sentiment which also occurs elsewhere in his works but is nowhere more clearly enunciated: A nation, no matter how well constituted, exists not for its own sake merely, but also for the sake of the good it can do to humanity. When its strength is spent its right to exist is forfeited. The death of a nation, when it has served its time, is as natural as that of any individual. A full knowledge that its time is limited is as wholesome to a nation as to the individual citizen is the knowledge that he has only a limited space of time to work out his own destiny and, in part at least, the destiny of those who come after:[1] "No! a nation that knows that it will some day cease to exist is by so much the keener to make good use of its allotted time, lives all the longer and leaves behind a more glorious memory. For it will grant itself no rest until it has fully developed and made potent the capabilities which are latent in it, just like a man who assiduously sets his house in order before he departs this life. . . . When a nation has completed its peculiar task, a few days more or less of continued existence are no longer of any account; a new order of things is already waiting at the portals of its time. And so I must confess that perhaps once a year in sleepless night or on a solitary walk I fall a prey to such thoughts, and I try to picture in my imagination the type of people that may some day flourish amid these mountains. And each time,

[1] VI, p. 287.

I go to my work with greater zest, as if I could thereby accelerate the work of my people, in order that that future race may look upon our graves with respect!"

Ardently attached to Switzerland tho Keller was, he was not the arrant chauvinist wholly to forget in this attachment the general good of humanity within or without the borders of his own native land. In keeping with his chastened and enlightened patriotism was his love and admiration for Germany, whose language and literature were his spiritual home. Some unguarded speculations as to the possibility of closer political affiliations with the larger Germany at some future time once got him into difficulties. It was on the occasion of a farewell banquet given in March, 1872, in honor of Professor Gusserow, who had accepted a call to the University of Strassburg. Keller's speech on this occasion "raised a great dust in the public press of Switzerland and Germany,"[1] and he felt constrained to make a public post-festum explanation of the unguarded words spoken without previous preparation on the spur of the convivial moment.[2] Stripped of its after-dinner embellishments, Keller's thought had simply been that the time might come when Switzerland might find it feasible to seek closer political alliances with some one of her more powerful neighbors, if this could be done without any sacrifice of liberty or national dignity. His defense ends with the words: "For such an alliance, such a refuge in time of future storms, my thoughts by preference turned to Germany. For I should much rather go there, where there is efficiency, strength and light, than where the opposite of all this prevails. In the meantime, do not let us quarrel about Caesar's beard."

Keller himself did not seem to look forward to the ultimate dissolution of his people in anything like the spirit of stoical resignation depicted in the passage quoted from "Das Fähnlein." He evidently considered the peculiar task of Switzerland as a nation very, very far from complete. Adolf Frey

[1] Baechtold III, pp. 22, 23.

[2] *Basler Nachrichten* of April 1, 1872. Reprinted in Nach. Sch., pp. 358-360.

says of him:[1] "Manfully as he could submit to misfortune and severe dispensations of fate, he declared that he would not be able to endure the downfall or dismemberment of Switzerland by foreign aggression. When such a misfortune was incidentally suggested in our conversation by the menacing world-crises of late years, he resolutely declared that he would take his old pistol and shoot a bullet through his head if such a thing should come to pass. The thought that his home could some day cease to be the seat of freedom was deadly and abhorrent to him, for he was from head to foot a republican by birth and by conviction."

The patriotic enthusiasm which pervades "Das Fähnlein" reaches its climax in the speech of young Hediger on behalf of the seven old champions of freedom when they present their trophy. It is as beautiful a panegyric as can be found anywhere on the little mountain republic, which, with all its heterogeneousness, is yet a model of national solidity and social well-being in the very best sense. The feasting crowd in the pavilion, whose picturesque variety and spontaneous decorum are described with such epic charm, is the living illustration of Karl's speech, a *tableau vivant* of the variegated, prosperous and happy little fatherland in which there exists so little real poverty or unrelieved distress.

In old Hediger's admonition to his son to use his newly-discovered talent for speech-making sparingly and wisely, Keller once more gives utterance to that mystic faith in the collective wisdom of the people which has already been noted:[2] "The very heart of the people you can stir only with the full weight of truth."

That the prowess of the younger generation may not seem to consist in words merely, but in deeds as well, young Hediger is made to achieve an almost unheard-of record as a shot. Woman also has her share in the good work. This is signified

[1] Adolf Frey, "Erinnerungen an Gottfried Keller." *Deutsche Rundschau*, Vol. LXIX, p. 118.

[2] VI, p. 331. It also occurs in "Martin Salander," the product of Keller's pessimistic old age, as regarded by some of his contemporaries: "However, he would soon take fresh courage again, trusting to the inexhaustibly fruitful subsoil of the common people, which ever again would send forth shoots, straight and high." (VIII, p. 93.)

in the happy effect the presence of Hermine has on Karl's marksmanship. That the race is not deteriorating physically, is shown by Karl's victory in a trial of strength over the unruly shepherd-boy of fifty. A tribute is also paid here to the excellence of the system of public education in vogue in Switzerland, the actual result, as well as the ideal of which is the all-round development of every citizen in every class of society. In short, the whole story is a glorification of the snug little fatherland, for the future of which under the new order of things Keller holds out high promise.

Two decades later he is much less optimistic. In a letter to Theodor Storm of June 25, 1878, he says:[1] "The 'Fähnlein', scarcely 18 years old, is already an antiquarian curiosity. Patriotic political contentment and the triumphant, old-fashioned liberalism are as if they had vanished. In their place have come social distress, railroad troubles, feverish and never-ending hurry." These are some of the conditions with which "Martin Salander" deals. In the new constitution of the Canton of Zürich which came into effect in 1869, the principle of representative government had largely given way to that of direct popular sovereignty effected by the operation of initiative and referendum. As early as 1852 Keller had expressed himself in a letter to Wilhelm Baumgartner as opposed to these principles of direct and unlimited democracy:[2] "But just as a constitution is nothing supernatural and imperishable, so also is the self-government of a nation not the goal, but only the means of its existence. A nation that is obliged to spend all its time over this means, is like a man who prepares a mess of crabs and suffers the pangs of hunger the while. . . . Representative democracy will therefore be the best expression of Zürich popular sovereignty until the time comes when all psychic and physical relationships have become so clear and ductile that self-government of the most direct kind can go on without too much noise, loss of time, friction and confusion. That will be the golden age when everything will run as if by clock-work, and one man need

[1] Albert Köster, "Briefwechsel zwischen Keller und Storm," p. 30.
[2] Baechtold II, p. 203.

only look at the other in order to fit into the general scheme of things with him." It is not surprising, therefore, that his attitude toward the evils incidental to these innovations should have been a much more censorious one than that in reference to conditions, good and bad, which had followed upon the more conservative federal constitution of 1848.

Keller's definition of the place of women in the state is another illustration of his unwillingness to force democratic theories to their remotest conclusions. The indirect influence of women on what he considers as essentially the affairs of the men is beautifully and humorously suggested in the shooting episode in "Das Fähnlein." Karl's unprecedented achievement as a shot is due to the hypnotic presence and the almost tyrannical encouragement of Hermine. Frau Amrain, a woman of very few words ordinarily,reads her son a surprisingly long and effective lecture on his duties as a citizen. But not for a moment does it occur to her that she ought to have a direct share in these duties herself. In so far as Martin Salander's views on this subject can be considered identical with those of Keller himself, they are most definitely expressed as follows:[1] "Martin did not belong to the advocates of the emancipation of women by giving them equality with the men in civic life. Great as was his admiration for his own wife, he never expressly sought her advice or opinion in regard to public matters. Thus he could maintain his own point of view. But he was on that account all the readier to grant her the influence she exerted of her own accord. He would speak of practically everything which exercised him, and that mostly in the form of an audible thinking in her presence, at breakfast, at dinner, as he prepared for bed in the evening, or when out walking. She then had the choice of seizing upon any particular subject and expressing her sentiments or objections, or maintaining silence. In the latter case he took it for granted that she was totally indifferent to the matter under consideration, and gradually permitted the soliloquy to subside. When she expressed acquiescence or objection, especially in reference to personalities, he in his turn had the choice of putting to good

[1] VIII, pp. 192, 193.

use what seemed to him wise and true, or to leave out of consideration, on the other hand, what might be due to an error of logic or lack of understanding. In this way he did not rob himself of the aid which the heart of a genuine housewife could give him, and gave her the honor which was due her."

Again and again Keller paid high tribute to woman in what he considered her own special sphere. What happens when she steps out of it he depicts in "Eugenia" of the "Sieben Legenden." Aquilanius, the consul, in seeking Eugenia for his wife, says:[1] "Now I beg you to give me your answer, not as scholar, but as a woman of flesh and blood." She refuses him; and after years of activity in the guise of a man, as scholar and as abbot of a monastery, she gets into a frightful dilemma through these same activities. Keller makes her finally appeal to her elemental womanhood, unqualified by any of her man-like attainments, to get herself out of it.

It need not be assumed that Keller intentionally wished to express in "Martin Salander" dissatisfaction and disappointment with his fatherland as a whole in the same sense that "Das Fähnlein" was an expression of satisfaction with it. But it is true that the Salander story deals with conditions in the body politic and in the social life of the times that were anything but satisfactory. Keller tries to console himself throughout that such phenomena of degeneracy as those depicted in the book, though inevitable, are merely incidental. The people as a whole is too healthy to be crippled permanently by such periodic epidemics of corruption. The son, Arnold Salander, serves to suggest this idea in the book. To offset in a measure the somewhat unfavorable impression the book made upon Keller himself as well as upon others, Keller projected a sequel, "Arnold Salander." In this he purposed to do full justice to the brighter side of the political and social life of the fatherland. Again it is the younger generation that is the hope of the nation. As it stands, the book, so far as its didactic import is concerned, serves as a warning against the abuses which the freest kind of democratic institutions foster, and for which there would seem to be no adequate

[1] VII, p. 348.

political remedy. Not democratic institutions of government and perfect systems of education alone are an absolute guarantee against the common failings to which all mankind is exposed.

It is not so much in the matter treated that "Martin Salander" as a book, especially as a book by Gottfried Keller, is somewhat disappointing. Unpleasant social and political conditions are treated, or at least touched upon in others of his works which one reads with a good deal more satisfaction. But in this one the humor with which the subjects are treated is less spontaneous and indulgent; the laughter at the follies of mankind is not so completely free from bitterness and vindictiveness as in the preceding works.

As Keller depicts the situation in the book, the increase of direct participation in the government on the part of the people had not resulted in a proportionate increase of democracy in the nation as a whole. On the contrary, it had given an impetus to a species of "Strebertum," of social climbing, on the part of the lower levels of society, that in its tendency is anything but democratic, and is frequently disastrous to the individual as well as to society. The proletariat under the new régime is more industrious and prosperous than ever, but, far from being satisfied with this prosperity and well-being within its own sphere, it begins to arrogate to itself airs and ambitions in imitation of the classes higher up. The washerwoman, Frau Weidelich, need not be considered as a representative of her whole class in this respect. There still remains a substratum of sound good sense as represented by her industrious and modest, tho somewhat too retiring husband, a most worthy man. But for the moment the noisier, showier element in the proletariat prevailed. The airs and the snobbery of the Weidelich twins is a part of this same development. Their criminal financial speculations grow out of the same desire for external emulation without inner solidity of character.

This propaganda against "Strebertum" is nothing new with Keller by any means. As early as 1849 he speaks of it in an article on Jeremias Gotthelf in the *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*:[1] "For the reactionaries complain, and not at all

[1] Nach. Sch., pp. 96-98.

without reason, that through so-called enlightenment, that is to say, through the improvement and extension of the common schools, there is aroused an unnatural ambition, all sorts of puffed-up assumption and social discontent. A peasant boy learns to write a good letter or to survey a meadow, or has worked out the sex-propagation of plants, or has learned a few historical dates back of 1812 and 1798. The father says: 'Good Gracious! My boy must become a clerk of the court, or why not a lawyer, a doctor, an engineer, or a professor.' And instead of an intelligent and capable citizen, he raises for the state with the money he has earned by the sweat of his brow, a shifty blackguard, a pettifogging attorney and venal go-between, a tippling geometrician who has nothing to do because he has not got the stuff in his head beyond the surveying of the afore-mentioned meadow, a quacksalver and conceited schoolmaster who understands everything except children." He then suggests a remedy: "But for this sorry state of affairs, not enlightenment, but human folly is to blame; and the remedy lies in education itself. In the first place, this false ambition is simply an initial stage and will be overcome in the natural course of continued progress. In the second place, the folk-poesy of which we have been speaking will come to the rescue. Let the dwellers in cottages realize that their hearts beat in just the same way as those of distinguished people; let them realize that their love and their hatred, their joy and their sorrow are just as momentous as the passions of princes and counts. Let the hearty peasant lad feel that his hand has its known weight and dignity, that his merry eyes cast as good a light into the land as any others. Let the solitary, gray-haired grandmother know that a village churchyard is just as much a seat of noble sorrows and of mysterious fate as the cloister of an ancient abbey. Let the little country maid perceive that her little chaplet is greener and of higher worth than many another. Then at last this mad craze for getting on in the world, this mania for social distinction will vanish like a gloomy mist. For every genius who, nevertheless, by his own merit, works himself beyond his own station, another from another station will forthwith take his place.

Many a land-botching and whiskey-distilling country snob, who now is neither fish nor fowl, neither gentleman nor peasant, will then become a capable husbandman, when prejudice has disappeared, and he need no longer fear to lose caste when he finally dons the smock-frock and puts his hand literally to the plow it hankers after."

At the time when he wrote "Martin Salander" he was less hopeful of the speedy advent of this happy time; less hopeful of the results to be obtained by improved methods of education and the spread of real culture among the people:[1] "At any rate, just at present great uncertainty and discontent prevail in almost everything. Strangely enough, one begins again to question from the very beginning what after all is the real function of education." Among the notes Keller made while working on "Martin Salander" is one quoted by Baechtold to much the same effect:[2] "Pestalozzi. Folk-book. Hummel, the bailiff. Where are we now after a hundred years? How about the influence of the schools of the past forty years, of enlightenment, prosperity?"

Under a system of direct democracy, Keller furthermore points out another danger for the ordinary citizen of the better sort who is moved by an honest desire to do his duty toward his country: the danger of spending too much time and energy in public affairs to the detriment of his private interests. Martin Salander has a strong tendency in this direction. Elsewhere in his works, especially in "Der Wahltag"[3] and in "Frau Amrain," Keller had shown how, on the other hand, the citizen of the better sort can become indifferent to his public duties to the great harm of the state. Public matters are left to a clique of professional politicians whose private character and public operations leave much to be desired. As usual, Keller's ideal is midway between: the man of real worth and character like the son, Arnold Salander, who does what he can, does not worry too much if things go a little wrong temporarily, does not speculate on future difficulties, but waits for them to come to him; when they come, he meets them with decision

[1] Letter to Jakob Moleschott of July 28, 1878. Baechtold III, p. 397.
[2] Baechtold III, p. 643.
[3] Not included in the "Gesammelte Werke." See Nach. Sch. pp. 277-296.

and the energy which men like his father are prone to dissipate needlessly in too much speculation about all sorts of future possibilities.

Keller not only protests against the "Strebertum" from below, but also against unwarranted exploitation and aggrandizement from above. One day Martin and his son discuss the question, whether by bold financiering they are to increase their wealth still more, or whether they are to continue working quietly as they have done and restrict their efforts to maintaining the position they have won. Martin advances arguments for expansion with the public weal in view. The government had undertaken a formidable sociological and industrial program. There is the danger of burdensome taxation, especially for the monied classes. Among other things the father says:[1] "But what led me to the question is the future of our country. I fear the time is no longer far distant when the government will lay a heavier hand on capital. So I thought it might be well if one were in a position to contribute without exactly getting impoverished over it." Arnold replies:[2] "That is not the way I look at it. I do not propose to be the money-maker for future things that I cannot approve. I shall much rather fight such high-handedness as long as I can. If it succeeds, all well and good, I shall calmly submit; for it is a matter of indifference to me whether they take from us two million or ten. . . . . But with or without all this money, I haven't any fears!" The father is pleased with this counsel and says:[3] "Let us promise at this hour never to go back upon the country or the people whatever they may enact." Keller's ideal citizen is loyal to his fatherland, even if things do not always go exactly according to his wishes or his own private interests. These are his ideals of moderation and of true democratic compromise.

Keller also saw the general economic dangers of too great industrial exploitation for the community as a whole, as well as for private individuals and the various social classes, high

[1] VIII, p. 353.
[2] VIII, pp. 353, 354.
[3] VIII, p. 354.

and low. Among the notes for "Martin Salander" occurs the following:[1] "There will come a time when the black treasure which the sun has stored in the earth will have been used up, and that in fewer hundreds of years than it has taken thousands to accumulate it. Then electricity will have to come to the rescue. But since the living forests are already slowly but surely being consumed, where is the regulated water-power to come from which is to drive the electric machines? That's where the mad, 'More, more, ever more!' will lead, and 'Sufficiency' will be consumed."

Thus "Martin Salander" is to a large degree, and it is safe to say the projected "Arnold Salander" would have been only to a lesser degree, a protest against a common but mistaken ideal of democracy: the opportunity for all to become rich and great; in reality, the opportunity for the strong to outstrip and exploit the weak without consideration or compunction, with, as a result, greater inequalities and less real democracy than ever. To this travesty of democratic thinking, Keller would oppose his own ideal: a guarantee to all of the opportunity to work out their own individual destiny in private well-being, and in harmony with the interests of the community at large, and without offensive and vulgar "Strebertum" from below, and unrestrained and uncontrolled aggrandizement and exploitation from above; opportunity for everyone, privilege and abuse of power for no one.

The "Martin Salander" notes[2] further give some general idea of the character which the projected sequel, "Arnold Salander," would have assumed had Keller lived long enough to write it. In the midst of the general political and social degeneracy, at a time of extreme peril, real men are again to come to the fore. Again Keller's hope for the future is the mystic faith in the power of the people to assert the best that is in them, and save themselves at such a crisis:[3] "Opposition of the men of order who, as if springing out of the earth, gather with spontaneous might from all sides, and strike down every-

[1] Baechtold III, p. 645.
[2] Baechtold III, pp, 638-646.
[3] Baechtold III, p. 644.

thing that opposes them." Such cycles of alternate national degeneracy and corruption on the one hand, and of national virility and uprightness on the other, seemed to Keller in his old age to be inevitable. In another Salander note he says:[1]

"The corruption, the moral decadence of the body politic is just as capable of regeneration as the physique of a people, through reaction of its powers, natural forces, repose. There is everywhere in history this rhythm of sinking and rising. Lucky if the periods last only so long that the memory of the happiness of the one maintains the balance against the evil of the other."

The sharp criticism of contemporary social and political evils in "Martin Salander" led some of its readers to see in it the pessimism of old age on the part of the author. But the follies of mankind are just as mercilessly castigated in writings of Keller of a much earlier date, in "Die Leute von Seldwyla" among others, to be sure in a somewhat happier frame of mind.

The plea for moderation and a dignified sobriety in all things which pervades "Martin Salander" was no real sign of reaction or retrogression on the part of the author. This plea is just as forcefully expressed in Keller's private and public utterances of a much earlier period, and these principles of balance and of compromise are fully in accord with the best ideals of an enlightened and intelligent democracy. It is only in his earliest poetic productions that Keller reveals the immoderate and inflammatory republicanism characteristic of the immaturity of youth, or narrowness of intellectual outlook.

Keller's optimistic faith in the capacity of the people to work out their own social and political destiny is just as forcefully expressed in his last published book and the notes he had collected for it and its sequel, as in any of his earlier writings; and this too in the face of actual conditions in his fatherland and elsewhere which, tho temporary, by no means looked promising for the future.

[1] Baechtold III, p. 645.

CHAPTER II

From Romanticism to Realism. Religious Ideals

Keller's romanticism was not the product of his reading or his association with literary men of romantic tendencies. It was not a conscious cult with him, but it was a part of his very character. As a child he possessed, to an uncommon degree, the common juvenile tendency to fantastic day-dreaming. In "Der grüne Heinrich" little Heinrich Lee fancifully identifies the idea of God with the cock on the tower of the church visible from his mother's window.[1] Later a colored picture of a huge striped tiger takes the place of this. The first womanly form that pleased him becomes for him "the white cloud" on account of the impression she made upon his youthful fancy the first time he saw her, dressed all in white. The roof of the church is for him "the mountain."

His youthful tendency to indulge in fantastic and grotesque day-dreaming further found ample stimulation in the wonder-tales, and in the grotesque personality generally of one of his mother's tenants, Frau Hotz, the Frau Margret of "Der grüne Heinrich." Of her the narrator says:[2] "In the meantime I had formed a friendship which came to the assistance of my groping imagination. . . . In view of the simplicity and prosiness of my mother, this friendship became for me what grandmothers and nurses with their rich store of fairy-lore are in other cases for children craving such things." And a little later, in speaking of the whimsical and comical husband of this Frau Margret, he says:[3] "In this way he was an excellent complement to the fantastic personality of his wife, and I had the opportunity of drinking directly from the

[1] Heinrich Lee is here identical for the most part with the child Keller himself. The autobiographical element in "Der grüne Heinrich" is treated briefly in the next chapter. See pp. 57-58.

[2] I, p. 61.

[3] I, p. 78.

source that which in other cases people fix up for the children of the cultured in books of fairy-tales. To be sure this material was not so innocuous, nor so calculated for the innocent morality of childhood as in these books. But at the same time it always contained some human truth, and the rich treasure-trove of Frau Margret's miscellaneous and crowded odds and ends supplemented the mental images. All this served to ripen my imagination, somewhat prematurely to be sure, precocious as it was, and sensitive to strong impressions, just as the children of the common people become habituated at an early age to the potent beverages of their elders."

His resolution to become a painter after his expulsion from school, as related in Chap. 19 and 20 of "Der grüne Heinrich" (1879), was not based on any very deep conviction of his destiny in this direction. It was rather the romance of it that appealed to him, and he hoped by diligent practice and training to become proficient in an art which he deliberately chose, to the practice of which, however, he did not feel himself driven by any very strong inner compulsion or necessity. As an art-student he displayed a tendency to fantastic whimsicalities quite like those of some of the less wholesome representatives of the later Romantic School. This was especially the case with the kind of work he did for his one-time Zürich teacher, Peter Steiger, the Habersaat of "Der grüne Heinrich." This Habersaat permits his pupil to make studies after nature. Heinrich, instead of strictly following nature, amuses himself with all sorts of fanciful compositions, and with these astonishes the unsuspecting charlatan. So imperfectly was the would-be teacher acquainted with the natural environs of his native city, and so little did he know the principles of the art he professed to teach, that his pupil for a considerable time indulged a malicious delight in thus mystifying and deceiving him.[1]

About the same time Keller himself was the victim of a similar deception. He was indulging in a species of romantic moonshine in a correspondence which he was carrying on with a certain Johann Müller of Frauenfeld. For a time the young

[1] I, pp. 285-287.

Keller marveled at the literary achievements in the letters of this youthful friend, whose "Schöngeisterei" so very much outstripped his own efforts as far as literary merit was concerned. He finally discovered that this friend copied copiously from various authors, and gave out this plagiarism as his own intellectual product.[1] The youthful literary efforts spoken of and quoted in part by Baechtold[2] show marked romantic features; romantic stories of adventure and prose-poetry quite in the style of the young Heine indicate the strong romantic bias of his mind at this time.

There is much of romantic expectancy in his attitude of mind on setting out for Munich as related in "Der grüne Heinrich," especially in the older version. The unhappy experiences connected with his sojourn in Munich did not prevent him from looking forward to his return to Germany in 1848 with similarly rosy and romantic vision. Chamisso, E. T. A. Hoffman, Uhland and others of the later romanticists, as well as Jean Paul, had a tremendous appeal for the young Keller, and no doubt exercised a considerable influence upon him.

In Keller's published works, chronologically considered, romanticism manifests itself first of all in a nature-cult of the Wordsworthian and Rousseau type. The first poem of the 1846 collection, entitled "Evening Hymn to Nature," is of this character:[3]

Enfold me in Thy leafy green,
In soft sleep lull me with Thy lay;
The radiance of Thy morn serene
Me timely then awaken may.
To weariness I've joyed with Thee,
My eyes are leaden with Thy light;
I harbor now one only plea,
In dreams to slumber in Thy night.

The merry gleam of childhood's eyes
With blossoms Thou wast wont to please;

[1] Baechtold I, pp. 62-73.
[2] Baechtold I, pp. 74, 75. 422-427.
[3] The text of the two stanzas quoted is almost exactly that of IX, p. 40.

Thy ready smile would ever rise
Chance boyhood woes away to tease.
And if fierce hatred, matchless love
My sterner years have captive led,
Yet ever I a child could rove
When I for Thee their bondage fled.

The 1846 collection contains no less than thirty-four poems of this type.

The second stanza of the third poem in the series "Night," to which reference has already been made in another connection, reads as follows:[1]

A blessed isle amid the billows rests
Like sleeping babe within its mother's arm;
The surf draws round its frothy silver crests,
So soft, so white, in Night's pale silent charm.

The poem continues to describe the peace and purity of man and nature in this happy island. Then comes a rude awakening; a ship approaches with the roar of cannon, the hungry crew is eager for spoil, and the poet breaks out into a condemnation of European culture which is quite Rousseauesque:[2]

Awake, awake, calm garden of the sea,
Give thy young bloom for—worthless toy and bead!
Lo, happy folk, soon in thy flesh will be,
The talons sharp of European greed!

The quaint little poem, "Sonntagsjäger,"[3] expresses the same feeling of kinship with all living creatures which Wordsworth expresses in "Hart-leap Well" and others of his nature-poems. This nature-cult also persists throughout the cycle of "Love Poems" with the addition of other romantic motifs here and there: the care-free joy or tender melancholy of vagabondage,

[1] "Nachtfahrer," IX, pp. 25, 26.

[2] Text of the 1846 collection:

Wach' auf, wach' auf, du stiller Meeresgarten,
Gib deine Blüte hin für—Glaskorallen!
Sieh, deines rosig, frischen Fleisches warten,
Du schönes Volk, Europas feine Krallen!

[3] Text of the 1846 version very nearly identical with that of IX, p. 63.

and others. Number one of the "Love Poems" of the 1846 collection expresses the same romantic idealization of childhood, the same yearning for its departed and dimly remembered joy so frequently also found in Wordsworth:[1]

> Let me mirror me in days of yore,
> . . . . . .
> Knowing neither Truth nor blasting Lie,
> Pure as snow, I in the pure sun lay,
> While the veil o'er childhood's untaught eye
> Kindly barred the glaring light of day.
> O thou vanish'd glee!
> Call'st over wood and lea,
> Soft as quail's faint note from far away.

A number of Keller's later characters are by no means distantly related to the wanderers and vagabonds who occasionally appear in his early romantic poetry. Green Henry, Pankraz, Strabinski, all have something of the romantic search for the blue flower, and in this respect in a sense belong to the same genre as Heinrich von Ofterdingen, Eichendorff's Taugenichts, Peter Schlemiehl, etc. While Keller's treatment of these characters shows strong tendencies to realism, there is still abundant romantic matter to be found throughout in it. Sometimes this appears in the form of romantic episode in the midst of more realistic material, as for example the description of the Dürerfest in "Der grüne Heinrich" with its reveling in romantic medievalism; Heinrich's Eichendorffian experiences at the castle of the count; Heinrich's dreams with all their richness and extravagance. Even in the last and most realistic of Keller's prose fictions, "Martin Salander," this episodic romanticism is not wholly wanting. In the midst of the realities of hunger, the mother Marie relates to her children wonder-tales of the little people who feast at the foot of the rainbow. The story of the origin of the name, "Das Lautenspiel," the idyllic country residence of one of Salander's daughters, is another of these romantic insertions right in the midst of rather unpleasant realistic material.

[1] The lines quoted from the 1846 version are almost identical with the corresponding ones of "Jugendgedenken," IX, p. 77.

Besides this episodic romanticism, there are complete stories which, as far as subject matter is concerned, must be classed as romantic. Such are, for example, the animal story, "Spiegel das Kätzchen," with its lure of buried treasure; the stories of old-time romance and adventure, "Dietegen" and "Ursula"; the historical romance "Hadlaub" with its reminiscence of Walter Scott and Wilhelm Hauff; the whole cycle of medieval legendary lore in "Die sieben Legenden," and the "Don Correa" story in "Das Sinngedicht."

There is therefore in Keller represented the whole apparatus of typical romanticism: nature-cult, medievalism, strange and adventurous vagabondage, legendary mysticism.

Distinct traces of realistic tendencies in Keller's early poetry can be seen already in the "Kleinmalerei" of the "Feuer-Idylle" of the 1846 collection. To be sure, the romantic splendor of a nocturnal blaze has poetic appeal even for those ordinarily unpoetic and unimaginative enough. In the 1851 collection there appear poems which distinctly show that such extraordinary stimuli were no longer necessary to arouse the poetic impulse in Keller. The commonplace, the sordid, even the repulsive, now has poetic content for him. The little story of the beggar-boy told in the poem "Der Taugenichts" is an illustration of this. The opening lines reproduce vividly the whole atmosphere of the very earliest days of spring with the simplest and most ordinary means:[1]

The earliest violets to peer out
In sunny vale had dared;
As vagrants royal, the beggar-rout
Into the land had fared.
The father lay beside the lake
The mother washed below;
And sheltered in the soggy brake,
Lay melting unclean snow.

[1] Text of the 1851 version essentially that of X, p. 84.

Another example of the same kind is the sonnet:[1]

"The vintage has been all too good!" 'twas said;
The beggar reels the city-gate to find;
His cheeks burn hot like summer roses red,
His straggling locks blow in the merry wind.

Before, behind, the laughing children tread,
Like noisy Baechanals in dance entwin'd;
O'er-topping all, the leering drunken head
Is in the mirror of their eyes enshrin'd.

At early morn, while still the children dream,
And bathe their sleeping eyes in visions bright,
The red autumnal woods with silver gleam,

A hoary frost had fallen over night;
The sot lies frozen, hid from morn's pale beam—
From drunken sleep he wakes in Heaven's light!

The humorous poem "Wochenpredigt"[2] of the 1851 collection suggests at least one of the underlying reasons for this marked turn to realism. It is a convincing bit of realistic description of the country-vicar's Sunday. In his perfunctory sermon he pictures an eternity of ever new activity, of translation from star to star, from sphere to sphere, in the eternal progress toward perfection. His aged and life-weary flock is not much edified thereby; in fact they do not hear what he says at all, they are all asleep; their only ideal of Heaven is eternal rest from their labors. After the sermon the fat little priest regales himself with a cooling draught, and is then at his wit's end to know how to pass the few hours before it is time to repair to the sumptuous repast to which he has been invited. The poem concludes:

O foolish little priest! I say,
If you deem long this single day,
What will you do with all these spheres,
The millions and millions of stars and years!

[1] Text of the 1851 version for the most part that of IX, p. 110.
[2] The text is substantially that of IX, p. 189.

A change, or at least a readjustment had come in Keller's conception of the universe. During the Zürich period from 1842 to 1848 he had been an ardent radical in sympathy with the best of the liberalizing ideals of Young Germany. But in the controversy which the new doctrines of David Friedrich Strauss and the materialistic philosophy of Feuerbach had stirred up, particularly among the German refugees in Switzerland, Keller had taken the more conservative side and had been a zealous, if not a very logical, defender of God and immortality. Several entries in his diary of the summer of 1843 give an idea of his state of mind in regard to this:[1] "I have lately read some of the literature of the German politico-philosophical propaganda and have got a good deal out of it. But I cannot become reconciled to its scornful and mutilating attitude. For I should like to see such a tender and beautiful institution as Christianity treated with more sympathy even if it were ten times an error, not for the sake of the priesthood and the special pleaders of privilege, but for the sake of the poor common people. For heretofore Christianity has been almost their only treasure, even if these impious leeches have abused them with it."

"I have lengthened the 'Whitsuntide' poem somewhat.[2] My heart beat audibly as I wrote, and a feeling of oppression and sadness came over me. It became clear to me what it means to combat a positive faith of two thousand years. . . . I shall cling to a positive, even if mystic element in religion; but if I ever have any say in the matter, I shall fight with all my might against the abuse, or interpretation of Divinity by human beings. . . . In the meantime I shall refrain from heaping scorn upon the dogmas of Christianity or any other religion. But I shall attack with all the means in my power the scoundrels who abuse these, and the fanatics and zealots who by means of them persecute and bring into disrepute those who do not agree with them in matters of faith." The "Whitsuntide" poem to which he refers protests against the abuse of the institutions of religion

[1] Baechtold I, pp. 211, 212.

[2] Baechtold I, p. 221. For the poem "Pfingstfest" see Baechtold I, p. 435.

for the enslaving of the minds of men, but ends with the following invocation:[1]

O God! that glorious day we long attend,
When Thou with fire baptizest all mankind.
Let cloudless shining morn on us descend
To herald freedom for the fettered mind!
When will oppressive dogma cease, and turn
To joyous worship, understood at last?
When will mankind the black pit's menace spurn,
That scoffs the Light, and blinded, holds us fast?

In a sonnet of the year 1846 Keller defended his yearning for immortality against the ruthless rationalism of the dogmatic radicals:[2]

It is not thought of self, nor vain pretense,
That bears my yearning heart beyond the grave.
'Tis my bold pride me from this dust to save
That flings the bridge beyond these realms of sense.

So swift thro' Earth's green time we hurry hence;
Unending are the tasks our spirits brave.
The trivial only your fond wishes crave,
Content with things of little consequence.

And even when full freedom we attain,
When Man, like rose-bud, breaks the primal gloom,
And for full light no longer strives in vain,

This longing stays, to reach beyond the tomb;
And still peals forth the nightingale refrain,
At sound of which the buds burst into bloom.

Keller did not cling to the idea of immortality out of logical conviction. It seemed to him necessary, however, for an endurable explanation of the universe. It was the poetical element in the dogma, and not the logical, that appealed to

[1] For the text of the original see Baechtold I, p. 438.
[2] The text of the 1846 version is essentially that of IX, p. 126.

him. This is even more distinctly emphasized in the sonnet of the 1846 collection which follows the one just quoted:[1]

If e'en on earth the Poet is endow'd
With prescience that 'tis not the soul that dies,
If at his touch from out the earthly shroud
He causes all things radiantly to rise,

If drench'd with God, to Heaven he turns his eyes,
To stay their vision at the tomb too proud:
What he has sung enrapt, you brand as lies,
His not the arguments by you allowed!

If basking 'mid the Poet's buds of May
A shining serpent rests on leafy throne,
She with the blossoms blends to poesy!

Yet he who'd argue all belief away,
And only feeds on Atheism's bone,
Forsooth, is an incarnate blasphemy!

In another sonnet[2] which in the 1846 collection precedes the two already quoted he implies credit to himself for at least doubting honestly, and again chastises the dogmatic bigotry of the professional atheists. The concluding lines are:[3]

Each hastes to crown with worthless straw his pate,
Brief adulation proudly to receive;
Cock-sure of everything—that seals your fate!

In spite of his radicalism in politics and his plea for intellectual and religious liberty, he is loath to part wholly with

[1] Wenn ein Poet ein Stück vom ew'gen Leben
Im Herzen trägt schon hier als Morgengabe,
Wenn in Verklärung alle Dinge schweben,
Die er berührt mit seinem Zauberstabe,

Und er den Blick nach dem, was über'm Grabe,
Unsterblichkeitgetränkt, nicht mag ergeben:
O, was er auch im Rausch gesungen habe—
Euch soll es drum kein gültig Zeugniss geben!

Wenn sonnend sich auf seinem Maienthron,
Buntschillernd eine Schlange sich erhebt,
So ist sie mit den Blumen Poesie:

Jedoch der Atheist von Profession,
Der nur vom Atheismus-Knochen lebt,
Ist eine eingefleischte Blasphemie.

Text almost identical with "Den Zweifellosen," IX, p. 125.

[3] Und dennoch krönt ihr schon mit Stroh das Haar
Als Eintagsgötter stolz euch zu begrüssen—
Der Zweifel fehlt euch—Das bricht euch den Stab!

the theocratic and mystical in religion. While somewhat troubled, no doubt, with the apparent inconsistency of this position, he is unwilling to surrender it and resents unsympathetic treatment of it by others. In a review of Arnold Ruge's works [1] he touches upon this in pointing out the widely divergent products of the noisy Hegelian school: "Karl Rosenkranz, in contrition and repentance, manufactures hymns which can be sung in the most saintly pietistic assemblies (see his 'Studies,' part 4: 'Metamorphosis of the Heart, a Confession'). In the meantime, it is absolutely incomprehensible for Arnold Ruge how one can be a liberal and open-minded man in mundane affairs, an unmitigated and energetic republican, and at the same time still have this, that and the other 'notion' of God and immortality in one's head. In his astonishment at this he becomes crass and trivial, like his friend Feuerbach in the epigrams and distichs in the third volume of his 'Complete Works'."

After Keller had begun his belated studies in Heidelberg, it was in reality through the personal contact with this same Ludwig Feuerbach, whom he mentions here with no great reverence, that the full and final clarification of his religious views was brought about and the inconsistencies in his thinking, as he regarded them, were finally removed. From the very beginning he comes to assume a much less prejudiced attitude toward this man and his writings. The contradiction and confusion in his thinking were cleared away; he now applies the same democratic republicanism in his religious outlook which had always been the basis of his political thinking. He himself characterizes his progress in this respect in various letters of the period. A few citations will show the later workings of his mind with regard to Feuerbach:

"It is comical how, just before my departure from Switzerland, superficial and ignorant lout that I was, I solemnly pronounced the last word on Feuerbach. Now, from a veritable Saul I have become a Paul. In the meantime I can vouch for nothing in the future; there still remains too much to be

[1] *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*, 1848, No. 204; "Arnold Ruge, Gesammelte Schriften von Arnold Ruge."

worked out. But I rejoice at last in a definite and stimulating philosophy.[1]"

"The most remarkable thing that has happened to me here, is that I am in the same company with Feuerbach almost every evening, drink beer with him and hang upon his words; this same Feuerbach whom I, simple fool, incidentally attacked a little in a review of Ruge's works, and regarding whom I had a few rude words with you not so very long ago. . . . . For the present, I cannot resist this revolt. My God had long ago become a sort of President or First Consul who did not enjoy much respect; I had to depose him. Of course I cannot swear that my universe will not again some fine day elect a suzerain. Immortality goes with the rest. Beautiful and stimulating as the thought of it is, turn the hand about in the right manner, and the reverse is just as deeply and potently significant. Those were very thoughtful and solemn hours when I began to accustom myself to the thought of absolute death. I can assure you, one pulls oneself together, and does not necessarily become any the wickeder. . . .

Objections which had occurred to me in my thinking he dealt with of his own accord in due course, and these he often disposed of in much the same way as I had already partly done in anticipation. For me the main question is this: does the world, does life become meaner and more prosaic after Feuerbach? Up to the present I must answer most emphatically, No! On the contrary, everything becomes clearer and sterner, but also warmer and more sensuous.—The rest I must leave to the future; for I shall never be a fanatic, and shall hold the beauty and the mystery of life capable of anything that seems in any way plausible to me."[2]

"What my attitude is toward God? I have none! Ludwig Feuerbach and the Constitutionals at Frankfurt, besides some rudimentary physiological studies,[3] have dissipated all my

[1] Letter to Eduard Dössekel of Seon, February 8, 1849. Baechtold I, p. 359.

[2] Letter to Wilhelm Baumgartner, January 28, 1849. Baechtold I, pp. 362-364.

[3] Professor Jakob Henle's lectures, which Keller attended at Heidelberg. The influence of these studies is discussed in "Der grüne Heinrich," Vol. IV, Chap. II, of the 1855 version, and Vol. IV, Chap. I (III p. 13) of the 1880 version.

luxurious dreams. A rationalistic monarchy had become as abhorrent to me in religion as in politics. . . .

"When I renounced God and immortality I at first believed I should become a better and a more scrupulous man. I have become neither better nor worse, but in good and evil I am ever the same, and also for you, my dear friend, if you still care to have anything to do with me, and I intend to prove it to you in person ere long."[1]

According to Keller's philosophy of life as it appears in his writings, a formal creed, orthodox or otherwise, does not make its holder better or worse. During the Heidelberg period, he was already working on his "Grüner Heinrich." Naturally, as the novel was so largely autobiographical, his religious thinking at this period is reflected in various parts of the book. This is especially true of the part dealing with Heinrich's sojourn in the castle of the count. The count as here depicted has a good deal that is reminiscent of Feuerbach, [2] and into his mouth Keller puts the words:[3] "It is all the same to me whether you believe in God or not! For I consider you a man with whom it makes no difference whether he lays the foundations of his being outside or within himself. If this were not the case, and if I were obliged to believe that you were this with God and that without, I should not have the confidence in you that I really have." He goes on to plead for absolute religious freedom, not only on the part of the state, but also among private individuals in their relations with one another. Above all else, the mind must never be closed through bigotry of any kind to new impressions. "As a matter of fact man goes to school all the days of his life, and none can say with certainty in advance what he will believe in the evening of his life.[4] Therefore we want unlimited freedom of conscience in all

[1] Letter to Freiligrath, April 4, 1850. Baechtold I, pp. 407, 408.

[2] Dr. Hans Dünnebier, "Gottfried Keller und Ludwig Feuerbach," pp. 141, 142.

[3] III, pp. 195, 196.

[4] Professor John Albrecht Walz, "The Life of Gottfried Keller" in "The German Classics of the XIX and XX Centuries," Vol. XIV, p. 7, says: "Later in life Keller returned to the religious views of his earlier years." I have found no positive evidence of this in any of Keller's later writings nor in the biographical material collected by Baechtold and others.

respects. The world has come to accept and look upon the discovery of an unknown law of nature or a new star in the heavens without becoming unduly perturbed or agitated over it. With the same objective calm it must come to look upon the processes and revelations in the spiritual life, prepared for everything, and ever candid with itself as human nature in the full light of day which says: 'Here I stand!' "

Keller nowhere positively denies the existence of God or the possibility of immortality. But positive ideas and dogmas of God and immortality for him belong to the realm of that which is as yet unknown. Positive knowledge of these things might come to the race or to the individual at some future day by processes similar to those through which all other knowledge comes. What his attitude is in the meantime toward this particular realm of the unknown is stated most definitely in "Das verlorene Lachen." When Justine and Jukundus become reconciled, she says:[1] "But what shall we do now about religion and the church?" Jukundus replies: "Nothing. If the Eternal and Unending ever remains in concealment and in silence, why cannot we for a time maintain a calm and joyous silence? I am tired of the obtrusiveness and the platitudes of all these meddlers who know no more than we, and yet insist on being shepherds to us. When the personal element is withdrawn from a religion, its temples decay, and the rest is silence. But the silence and repose thus gained is not death, but life, which continues to flourish, and is as full of light as this Sabbath morning. With good conscience we journey through it, prepared for that which is to come or not to come. With good conscience and at peace with ourselves, we go forth, and refuse to let stale and wretched platitudes tear heart and head, soul and intellect asunder. For all whole and undivided, we must face the judgment which overtakes us all." This is democracy of the most radical kind applied to the problems of the inner life: in the last analysis, each must be his own priest and his own judge.

[1] V, p. 369.

As early as 1845 Freiligrath had said regarding the strife over religious matters which had broken out among the German refugees in Switzerland:[1] "Funny fellows, these Germans, to quarrel about God while there are still kings to dethrone!" For Keller likewise the service of mankind was the real service of God. But this service must not be spurious or perfunctory; to be worth anything, it must be, or have become, a part of man's very nature. Dortchen of the castle episode in "Der grüne Heinrich" does not deal out her kindnesses and charities as from above and according to rule and formula. Her actions are the spontaneous overflow of wholesome human nature which feels itself part and parcel of the whole of life and nature, and she reacts upon the life about her on a basis of perfect human equality even toward those for the moment less fortunately situated in an external and material sense. To the vagabond Heinrich she is a sort of St. Elizabeth who puts her own special table service at his disposal quite as a matter of course. Furthermore, there is nothing patronizing or offensive or condescending in her attitude toward her plebeian companion, the gardener's daughter.

Justine in "Das verlorene Lachen" on the other hand, after the quarrel with her husband in regard to religious matters, tries to stifle her inner discord by redoubled activity in charitable and ecclesiastical endeavor:[2] "In order to occupy her thoughts and to find solace for her heart, she stood by the pastor, and gave herself up to the work of the church with renewed zeal, and also extended her activities to secular affairs. She undertook all sorts of executive offices, and used up many a good pair of shoes, much stouter than those she formerly wore, in her constant round from school to school, from house to house, from meeting to meeting. At all gatherings, ceremonial or for business purposes, at all public lectures and festivities, she occupied the front seat. But she found no peace, nor did the faintest smile return to her pale face." But the financial difficulties which overtake her family make it impossible for her to maintain this laudable but more or less

[1] Baechtold I, p. 245.
[2] V, p. 334.

spurious activity:[1] "So the leadership and the glory of Justine in church and society also fell away, and she kept out of sight in silence and embarrassment."

Meanwhile the poor working-girl, Agatha, and her aged mother, Ursula, both members of a primitive pietistic sect, live in almost abject poverty. But they are still able to bring comfort and encouragement to their fellow-sufferers:[2] "So long as they were able to work in this way they earned enough for their wants, could help their coreligionists, and contribute where it was necessary without holding back. And over and above that, they always had some little means or other through which to give expression to their kind-heartedness and gratitude toward the world for every little service, every little kindness which was shown them. . . . The only strife that existed between them was their rivalry toward one another in just such kindnesses and favors as they showed to strangers, since each, so soon as she was to be the receiver, would protest and maintain that this was unnecessary or too much." After the crash in the Glor firm, the daughter leaves her work in the Glor factories, and she and her mother have even a harder life now than ever. But their relations to their associates and others about them are unchanged:[3] "For they were much sought by friends and by those who were in need of a kind word. They would accept with sincere gratitude any little gift that was brought them, and would at once share it with the old monster.[4] She, however, would brusquely check up the partition, and rudely refuse to accept it if it did not seem to her to have been made with sufficient dispatch and punctuality." Even in the most humble circumstances, the essence of true religion can still express itself in unostentatious and spontaneous mutual helpfulness.

The service of mankind as the essence of true piety is also the underlying motif in a number of the charming stories of the "Sieben Legenden." Keller says in the preface that[5]

[1] V, p. 337.
[2] V, pp. 352, 353.
[3] V, pp. 355, 356.
[4] An unpleasant old hag who shared the same humble dwelling with Ursula and her daughter.
[5] VII, p. 343.

"the author felt the desire to give a reproduction of these vague and fragmentary creations. To be sure, in doing this, their faces were turned in a direction somewhat different from the traditional one." It must be admitted that these saints, as Keller depicts them, lose nothing of their saintliness, and certainly gain much in human attractiveness by thus having their eyes turned away a bit from the glories of the life beyond to the joys and duties of things actual and present. Eugenia and Vitalis both find their true sphere of usefulness and happiness here on earth when they turn from a life of monastic service of God to the life of ordinary normal human affairs. In the stories of the Virgin Mary she in each case interferes in the lives of her special protégés in order to advance their mundane affairs. The best gift laid on the altar of the Virgin at the great festival in "The Virgin and the Nun" is that of the nun Beatrice: the gift of a life devoted to a good and noble husband, and the eight stalwart and splendid sons through whom Beatrice has blessed her husband and enriched the world.

Keller applied the theories of democracy somewhat more absolutely and rigorously in his views on religion than in his political thinking. The most positive element in his religious or ethical thinking is his insistence on mutual helpfulness as the essence of true religion. The problems of the inner life, what a man is to believe with regard to the things as yet beyond the grasp of scientific certainty, must be left to the individual conscience of each human being.

Keller's views on the religious instruction of children will be touched upon in the next chapter.[1]

[1] See p. 81.

CHAPTER III

Realism. Educational Ideals

The chief significance of Keller's contact with Feuerbach in its literary aspects was the impetus it gave to the tendency to greater realism which is already evident at an earlier period. As early as July, 1843, we find the following interesting entry in his diary:[1] "The instructive time of my first venture into the world, the three years which I spent in Munich, with all the impressions that I received there, the merry artist life, the troubled, anxious days I had there, and much else besides that deeply affected my mind, the return and flight to my mother's house: all this I let pass by me, working and suffering, without writing down as much as a syllable about it.

"But I still retain a pretty clear impression of the whole picture in its outlines and with its local color. If some day I should come forth out of myself, and as a second self, stir up and examine my own real self in the secret chambers of my heart, I could succeed pretty well in writing the story of my youth in spite of the fact that I heretofore never kept a diary. Only at an earlier period, as long as six years ago, I wrote down now and then, but very infrequently, a few isolated and fragmentary notices of what was going on within and about me."

These are the beginnings of "Der grüne Heinrich," and there is here no mention of a preconceived philosophical theory or propagandist formula to be elaborated through it. It was merely to be an "elegiac little novel dealing with the disruption of a youthful artist career through which mother and son perish."[2] What the author had in mind were the experiences of

[1] Baechtold I, pp. 194, 195.
[2] Nach. Sch., p. 18.

his own life, and out of these, for the most part, the novel grew. In working out the psychology of the various situations, the author in almost every case could go directly to his own experiences and observations. Concerning the hero the author says:[1] "Still, the part dealing with the childhood, more strictly speaking, is as good as true, even to the anecdotal in it; only here and there is there a slight suggestion of the confessional bitterness of Rousseau, due to a last lingering propensity to imitation."

Other characters besides the hero had their prototypes in actuality. Heinrich's father and mother are pretty faithful characterizations of Keller's own parents. A couple of his mother's tenants with their household furnished the models for Frau Margret and Father Jakoblein and the bizarre group associated with them. Meierlein also had his prototype; his name, in fact, was Meyer, and his character and career even in detail, were pretty largely as depicted in the novel. Heinrich's uncle was Keller's own uncle, the surgeon-farmer Heinrich Scheuchzer; Habersaat, a certain Peter Steiger; Römer, a painter whose real name was Meyer. The original of the count, as already noted, was Feuerbach; of Dortchen, Betty Tenndering,[2] sister of Lena Duncker, whom Keller knew and loved in Berlin.

The autobiographical also plays a large part in other works of Keller. Pankraz, the hero of the first of the Seldwyla stories, is in good part Keller himself, especially in relation to his mother and sister, and these in turn have a good deal in common with the mother and sister of the story. Frau Regel Amrain is Keller's aunt, Regula Scheuchzer, wife of Keller's surgeon-uncle. The women of "Der Landvogt von Greifensee" are all a part of Keller's own experience with definite prototypes in his own life. The Landvogt, besides being a well-known historical figure, also has analogies in character and experiences with Keller himself. The seven righteous of the "Fähnlein" all had their prototypes in Keller's own life and observation.

[1] Nach. Sch., p. 20, 21.
[2] *Deutsche Rundschau* of October and November, 1912.

Mere verisimilitude, however, is not necessarily all there is to realism. There are certain incidents and characters in the works of Keller which at first sight look like the inventions of fancy, but which are found to have a solid foundation in actual fact. The figures of Ursula, Agatha, and the Ölweib in "Das verlorene Lachen" are of this character. Baechtold points out that even here the prototypes existed in Keller's actual youthful experience, very much as he depicted them in the book. Here at least Keller had no need to resort to his fertile invention for material upon which to exercise his lingering taste for the strange and unusual.[1]

But not only where the characters have their prototypes in actual life does Keller succeed in conveying the impression of reality. Where he invents, the illusion of psychological reality is fully as perfect. Characters of this type are Anna and Judith of "Der grüne Heinrich." Hulda of the later Munich experiences of Heinrich is likewise a creature of Keller's own invention; but all of these breathe the breath of actual reality. The legendary figures and events of the "Sieben Legenden" are depicted with a circumstantiality and visuality that fully convey the illusion of truth. Keller's psychology is based throughout upon minute and accurate observation and experience.

"Der grüne Heinrich" does not begin with any preconceived philosophical dogma to be elaborated in it. But as the book develops, there also develops with it a sort of philosophy of life, or at least a philosophy on certain aspects of life which lay very near the author's immediate experience. This was only natural in view of the didactic tendency of Keller's mind. Life to him had to mean something, and naturally his book, a record of inner and outer experiences, also had to have its meaning. The philosophy of the book is the result of long and leisurely contemplation of the facts before the author's mind. How long and leisurely this contemplation sometimes could be, is amply shown in the correspondence regarding the publication of the book.

[1] Baechtold I, pp. 23, 24. Keller, in relating some of his dream experiences, himself comments upon this occasional improbability of actual facts and the incredulity with which their recital is received. See Baechtold I, p. 288.

Regarding the didactic and philosophical tendency of the book, Keller says in a letter to Vieweg of April, 1850:[1]

"The moral of my book is, that he who does not succeed in maintaining a relationship of security and order with himself and his family is also incapable of taking an effective place in civil life. In many cases society itself and the state may be to blame, and in that case of course the material would have a sociological tendency. In the given case, however, the character and the peculiar fate of the hero are to blame for the most part, and in this respect the novel would necessarily have rather an ethical significance. The conception and growth of the novel are not in any way the product of a merely theoretic, didactic purpose, but of first-hand observation and, unfortunately, of my own personal experience in part."

Here the blame for Heinrich's final failure and dissolution is ascribed for the most part to defects and limitations in his own character. About a year later, Keller's point of view had shifted somewhat. He now inclines more to the opinion that, even with a character such as Heinrich, a good deal could be accomplished, provided he received the right kind of religious and secular training with a view to correcting the defects of nature and fully developing his good potentialities. In a letter of the spring of 1851 to his friend Hettner he says:[2]

"I had the double purpose: in the first place to show what small positive guarantee even a free and enlightened state such as Zürich offers for the education of each and every individual, even at the present day, if this guarantee does not exist in the family or the private relationship of the individual; in the second place I wanted to follow up the psychic processes in a temperament which is richly endowed, and which goes out into the world with the rationalistic and sentimental religiosity of the enlightened but sickly deism of the present day, applies the arbitrary and fantastical standards of this eccentric religiosity to the unescapable phenomena of life, and goes to pieces over it."

[1] Baechtold II, pp. 98, 99.
[2] Baechtold II, pp. 165, 166.

Here Keller discusses what we might call the more external features of the Heinrich problem: Heinrich's equipment for life, or rather his lack of it. He emphasizes the fact that Heinrich was richly endowed by nature, especially in his emotional life, but he comes to grief not only on account of inherent weaknesses in his own character, but largely on account of imperfections in his external training: lack of firm parental guidance, early expulsion from school, misguided religiosity. Keller admits that the free and enlightened state of Zürich offered educational advantages in abundant measure for the ordinary and reasonably normal individual; but pronounced eccentricities of character were not properly provided for in the regular system. Thus it was possible for much good material to remain dwarfed and undeveloped, and even to go to actual ruin. In the case of Heinrich, when he, through long struggles, finally has attained that which in the regular course of events would have come much sooner, more naturally and at much smaller cost, it is too late for him to take advantage of it. Keller could not forget his unfortunate experience with the stern school authorities of his tender years.

But the other aspect of the situation must be considered along with this lack of regular training. A stronger character, intellectually would have overcome this initial handicap much more easily and much sooner, but Keller's hero is not of heroic proportions intellectually. He is no "Kraft- or Übermensch" who conquers circumstances or dominates life. He is a young man of mediocre intellectual fibre, but of high ideals and a profound capacity for emotion. This lack of power prevents him from realizing his ideals in the manner he is planning for himself.

His final break-down is, however, not due to a final abandonment of his ideals. It is wholly due to external circumstances. Time will not wait for him. The struggle is so prolonged that the time passes when a certain measure of success might have saved him and put him on his feet. One sustaining thought had always been the vindication of himself in the eyes of his mother. She does not live to see the

happier day, and that which would have made the struggles of the past seem not in vain, and would have made the happier day more than worth while, is suddenly taken out of his life. The very foundations of his moral being crumble away from under him.

It is not a physical but a moral impossibility for Heinrich to preserve his integrity toward the larger life about him after his integrity toward his family life and family consciousness has been disrupted. All that remains to him is what Keller always so strongly brings out in his good characters: his integrity toward himself. To preserve this he must renounce the life of final promise with, however, its sombre background of what Heinrich, in his intense emotionalism, feels as an outrage toward his mother. It is not a final and complete moral dissolution, but an instinct to preserve what is left to him of his integrity, which makes him welcome death. It is as if Heinrich were saying to himself: "I have been morally impotent toward those to whom most was morally due; I shall not make of life a moral *tour de force* in behalf of those toward whom so much less is due." Such a moral *tour de force* were possible, to be sure. The philistine frequently must make it to a greater or lesser degree; but this is a shift of life of which only the common and the coarser-fibred are fully capable. Their real inner moral fibre, which is the mainspring of all really genuine action and of really potent living, is broken up and loses its spontaneity. What such achieve or attain in life is after all only a moral *tour de force* and not a genuine life.

In a letter to Hettner, Keller gives a résumé of the whole question as it related to the tragic ending, and at the same time again puts a large share of the blame on defects in early training:[1]

"The fourth volume as conclusion contains the answer or the solution of the problem in the story of Heinrich's youth. Green Henry at an early age is deprived of the facilities for public instruction, and chooses an inadequate profession because he has no perspective and no discrimination. Lacking

[1] Baechtold II, pp. 232, 233.

other means, he is obliged to acquire incidentally here and there a few detached fragments of knowledge, and peep into the bright halls of culture through rare cracks. He finally discovers that his artistic efforts have been an error, that he might just as easily have become an ingenious connoisseur in any other speciality as in landscape-painting. He keenly perceives that man himself, not his environment, the soil, the vegetation, the atmosphere is the object of his gifts. Nor (in order to avoid the perpetual poet-theme in literature)[1] is the outcome a poet, let us say, but the untrammeled sympathy for human nature, which equipped with personality or personal experience, enters, or strives to enter into concrete human activities (the state) and to work according to the laws of truth and simplicity.

Heinrich's mind at last becomes clarified and independent, and it becomes possible for him to return home a changed man. But as he approaches the old town with energetic and beautiful thoughts, he comes upon the funeral of his mother. The tedious process of this self-education has worn her out after she has sacrificed everything with rare devotion, rare at least in her class of society. Heinrich can accept life only as something unified and coherent. He is unable to look ahead and play the world-improver without being reconciled to the past behind him. He is now suddenly broken. For the life of this plain, ignorant woman is just as important an element in his world as any other. Since he has renounced the thought of immortality, he feels the loss so much the more deeply and intensely, and has a firmer grasp of all that it involves: the family-tie in its physical aspect, the immediate source of being."

Reviewers and readers of the book expressed dissatisfaction with the tragic ending of the original version. In reference to this Keller says in addition to the above in another letter to Hettner:[2] "Your doubts regarding the death of Green

[1] The ridiculous figure of Viggi Störteler is Keller's only character who starts out with definite literary aspirations. Hadlaub becomes a poet to be sure, but not as a result of deliberate choice.

[2] June 25, 1855. Baechtold II, pp. 282, 283.

Henry probably occur to a good many people. At least, quite unpretentious and unschooled readers have said to me that they do not find this death very edifying. . . .

Another fact that helps to motivate his death, at least symbolically, is the wreck of his new hopes. For how can he enter upon a public career, or prepare himself for one, since he has an injured, or at least a troubled conscience with reference to the family, which is the basis of state communal life? Furthermore, he returns with the experience of a purified love, and cherishes keen hopes for its realization. But it is this very hope that makes life impossible for him, for a noble and unclouded life of marital or other happiness is scarcely conceivable in view of the nature of the mother's death.

But since all these new prospects in regard to life's happiness are broken, what else is there left for him to do? Time and philosophy, as well as the tolerance of society, would have rehabilitated him to be sure, since at heart he was without guile. But the blow comes all too suddenly and at the end of a long period of excitement which had stirred up his whole being. Now to be sure, this blow is a piece of arbitrariness, or whatever you wish to call it. But the business, or the book had to come to an end, and I believe this conclusion, with all its bare sketchiness, has greater significance than a summary marriage-chapter would have had."

The last sentence states a very real difficulty with regard to the ending. The book was completed at a time when Keller himself was still involved in a struggle to which he could as yet see no very definite end. He himself was still facing the serious problems of existence, and had not been able as yet to find a satisfactory solution to even the most tangible of them. And he refused to stoop to the banality of a happy ending to a serious book before he had fully worked out the logic of it in his own life. Not until twenty years later, when life had brought him no small measure of success, could he see a happier, and yet perfectly relevant conclusion. But here, too, the now confirmed bachelor shrinks from the vulgar commonplace of a final "marriage-chapter."

The earlier version of "Der grüne Heinrich" depicts the tragical possibilities of such a character. The later version with its happier ending shows how he may be reconciled with life in a final triumph over limitations of character and adversity of circumstance. If left to itself, youthful eccentricity may indeed work out its own salvation after a fashion. The story of little Meretlein in "Der grüne Heinrich" serves to show what can happen as a result of too much unintelligent interference with it. In the older version this episodic digression, really a little novelette within the framework of the larger one, in a measure foreshadows the fate of the hero. In the later version the story serves as an instance of what may be even worse than a policy of *laissez-faire* in the education of unusual and eccentric children.

Heinrich comes across the story in later years while on a visit to his native village. One hundred years or so before, a refractory little girl, known among the peasantry as the witch-child, had been placed in the household of a stern and pious pastor, who was to exorcise the demon with which she was supposed to be possessed. She was the daughter of a nobleman of the region by an unhappy marriage. The fact that her grandfather had led an unholy and vicious life gave rise to the supposition that her perversity probably was a visitation by Providence of the sins of the fathers upon the children. Her heredity was bad. She was not at all amenable to the discipline and training of ordinary children, and was particularly obdurate with regard to formal religious instruction. She could not even be induced to pronounce the names of the Holy Trinity, refused to learn the psalms assigned to her, and then later would be overheard singing these same psalms in her own fashion to worldly folk-airs or airs of her own composing. At the same time she was gifted and beautiful; she had the power of attracting birds and animals; was worshipped by the children of the village, nor were their elders by any means unsusceptible to her charms. The one form of formal instruction for which she appeared to have a liking was that given her by the pastor's wife in playing upon the spinet; but of this she was deprived as a punishment for

her delinquencies in other things. Among the gravest of these in the eyes of her pious guardian, was her fondness for bathing in secluded pools in the woods, or basking naked in the sun in hidden nooks of the countryside. Her natural propensities were not evil, but were understood as such by a benighted environment. All these eccentricities and good and evil potentialities were held to be the working of the evil one, for whose exorcism the spiritual powers of the pastor were requisitioned. That physical chastisement was not wanting in this work of grace was a part of the brutal discipline of the time; and be it said to the credit of the pastor, he did not seem wholly free from a feeling of repugnance in administering it. But all efforts at correction failed, because the child's nature was wholly misunderstood. She finally comes to grief when really intelligent treatment might have saved her. Even had she been left largely to her own devices, this child of nature would have saved herself.

Judith and Dortchen Schönfund are examples of what can become of such children of nature under more favorable circumstances.

While it is the business of the state to make adequate provision for the abnormal as well as for the normal, all failures in life must not be attributed to lack of educational opportunities. In the trial of the Weidelich twins in "Martin Salander" one of the lawyers for the defense lays the blame of the young men's wrong-doing to defects in the educational system of the country: even if these had received a state education which left little to be desired, their parents before them had not been sufficiently educated to cope adequately with their problems as parents. The presiding judge defends the state against this charge. Even the parents had had the advantages of the new order of things inaugurated through "Lienhard und Gertrud" and the practical work of Pestalozzi. The judge continues:[1] "Gentlemen of the jury! The worthy parents of the accused themselves in their childhood were children of the new era, as probably the most of the older people among us. But even if this were not the case, we could still not hold them,

[1] VIII; pp. 332, 333.

on the imputation of ignorance, nor the institutions of their time responsible for the sins of the children. For I believe that the household of the untutored countryman, even to-day as at all times, can be a school of honesty and faithfulness to duty!"

Pankraz, the hero of the first of the Seldwyla stories, is a problematical character in some ways not unlike Heinrich, but, unlike him, does not come to a bad end. After Keller had attained some degree of success as a poet, and after the mildly favorable reception of "Der grüne Heinrich," he takes heart. He is now willing to admit fully that misguided or unguided eccentricity does not always, or necessarily lead to disaster. In fact it may be that such youthful fools become wiser in the end than those who began more wisely.

Pankraz is just a plain, physically healthy boy with one or two rather unpromising peculiarities: an undaunted indolence and an abnormal capacity to brood. Keller is going to cure him of these faults and makes these very faults effect the cure, a method of procedure wholly in accord with the common educational theory of the discipline of natural consequences. A more than usually severe fit of the sulks drives the hero out into the world, and the sulks prevent his speedy return: his sister must not be given the opportunity to laugh at him again; hard necessity teaches him to work; he loses his proneness to idle dallying but not his capacity for being completely and gloriously moody and miserable. The final deliverance from this state of mind would seem to be at first sight all too arbitrary, badly motived, and sudden, and it is the part of the story with which Baldensperger among others finds most fault. That a lion should allow himself to be held at bay in the manner here described does seem somewhat improbable; but granted the possibility that Pankraz really outsulks the sulkiest of beasts, it must further be granted that such a unique and terrible experience would undoubtedly leave a profound and lasting impression upon his mind and character. Surely a few previously undreamed-of sensations might be expected to course through the troubled head of any one, lion-hunter or critic, undergoing such a trying experience.

Besides, Pankraz had already behind him a number of life's experiences which had prepared him for the seemingly sudden change. After his years of strenuous activity in the workshop of life's disillusionment, a good deal of the real sulker and brooder had already given way to the sober man of affairs who no longer retained his sulkiness through the necessity of having some employment for his thoughts, but rather through force of habit. The hours of intense reflection forced upon him by the lion were now all that was necessary to bring him wholly to his sober senses.

Another fact with regard to the character of the boy Pankraz ought to be considered here. In the opening paragraph we are told that the father of Pankraz had never been one of the worst of the natives of Seldwyla as far as their own peculiar Seldwylianism was concerned. He had always felt the longing to be a truly respectable and solid man. Keller here prepares the way for the development in the son of such a man as the father himself had wished to be. The moodiness of the son is in reality in a different manifestation this same longing for something better and more substantial than he felt himself to be as a part of the life about him. As in the case of Meretlein, so here heredity again plays a part in the final destiny of the character.

The author sums up the psychological result of Pankraz' wanderings and home-coming as follows:[1] "He fell into a profound and melancholy contemplation of human kind and human life; how it is just our lesser peculiarities, a kindlier, or on the other hand, a sterner temperament, that determine, not only our own destiny and happiness, but also the destiny and happiness of those associated with us; how through these lesser peculiarities of temperament we can be brought into a stern relationship of guilt toward our associates without knowing how it has come about, since, as a matter of fact, temperament is not a matter of our own volition."

The natives of Seldwyla are puzzled at the transformation in the prodigal:[2] "What had this negligible and insignificant

[1] IV, p. 26.
[2] IV, p. 27.

fellow been doing throughout all the long years of his youth without having used himself up over it?" (The ordinary Seldwylian usually came to the end of his tether at about the age of forty, an age, the notorious "Schwabenalter," when less precocious, but more substantial Alemannians are just beginning to wake up.) "This was the question which agitated all of them, and they could find no key whatever to the riddle because their knowledge of human nature and human psychology was too limited. They could not know that this stern and bitter temperament, which had caused him and his family such bitter sorrow, was the very thing that had so well conserved the rest of his nature, like a piece of pickled mutton in strong vinegar, and that it was just this that had got him safely through the dangerous Seldwylian years of pomp."

His sulkiness was after all not so reprehensible as at first sight might appear. In reality it was a part of the vague longing for something better, and it arose mainly through a vague sense of his incapacity to attain it; a vague dissatisfaction with himself that soured everything in life for him. In the end, this eccentricity which at first threatens to spoil his own life and also that of those connected with him proves his salvation. He loses it when he has become fully reconciled to the commonplaces of an ordinary but useful existence.[1]

Green Henry and Pankraz are left almost wholly to themselves in working out their destiny. Meretlein comes to grief through unintelligent and misdirected interference from without. What this direction from without can accomplish under more favorable circumstances is illustrated in the case of "Frau Regel Amrain und ihr Jüngster," the third of the Seldwyla stories.

Keller here sets himself the problem: what may become of him whose antecedents are a mixture of good and bad, whose

[1] The cure of Pankraz' sulkiness undoubtedly expresses Keller's own longing to be cured of the irascibility which at times made itself rather trying to his friends. Unfortunately it increased as age advanced. Baechtold explains this by what he calls Keller's lack of goodwill. Dünnebier rejects this view and sees the root of this moodiness in two circumstances; first, in Keller's bachelor life. Secondly, he ascribes it to Keller's passionate unwillingness to have his train of ideas disturbed by external influences. He regarded this as an infringement of his right to be left in peace, of which right he was exceedingly jealous. It jolted out of his reflective and creative mood, he might have to wait for days before it came back to him again.

potentialities are pronounced neither for good nor for evil, but whose training is in excellent hands. Fritz' father is an ordinary Seldwylian, but his mother is of better stock, and he is trained by her into a man who differs wholly from his environment of empty braggers and bluffers. The hard necessities and exigencies of life are not here the teachers; but the mother with her excellent good sense trains the boy to face these successfully, so that from the very beginning of his manhood he is enabled to take his place as a leader in the commercial, social and political life about him. He need not waste years in stumbling about in the dark, but can at once, naturally and spontaneously, meet successfully, even the seemingly most compromising and embarrassing situations. Throughout the whole book, we seem to hear Keller say: "This is the training which I did not have, but which I might well wish to have had."

Altho the educational processes through which Pankraz and Fritz Amrain attain their stature as men are totally different, they still have broad similarities. It is obvious that there is little, in fact nothing of formal training in the case of Pankraz. Whatever he learns, he learns on the spot where he needs it. What there is of preparation for later life is a preparation of character, not a storing for future use of intellectual or professional equipment, nor training in its use. This is also largely the case with Fritz. His mother does not anticipate very much. She gives him what he needs at each step, or puts him in the way of getting it. The important thing is character, not formal or technical equipment. In the case of Fritz the process is guided and directed from without; in that of Pankraz it is not even self-directed, while in the case of Heinrich Lee there is at least an honest attempt at self-direction. Furthermore, in the case of Heinrich the self-direction largely takes the form of preparation in equipment. The ultimate result of character is scarcely thought of by the youthful Heinrich. In the earlier version the result is disastrous; in the later, these misdirected professional efforts become incidents in the hero's larger experience and have a due share in the development and the rounding out of his character.

In the case of Heinrich and Pankraz, Keller lays the ~~ed~~ phasis upon life's actual experience as a means of education. Fritz Amrain's education is also largely accomplished through the experiences of life as he comes in contact with them. But for him this experience is supplemented by the sympathetic and sagacious guidance of his mother. In his case the process is much less laborious and painful. He is saved from many an error into which the unguided naturally fall. His mother lets him stumble occasionally so that he may realize the ultimate consequences of his little follies both for himself and her: the discipline of natural consequences once more. When Fritz is taken prisoner in the second revolutionary raid in which he takes part, she merely assures herself that he is in no immediate danger. She has ample means to ransom him but prefers to give him time to think a little in his imprisonment and to learn his lesson. And when he has learned it, she very wisely says very little about it afterwards.

For the most part the mother's interference in her son's experiences takes the form of suggestion with as little formal verbal instruction as possible. This makes her verbal interference, when the occasion for it arises, all the more effective, as is seen in the lecture she reads her son with reference to his reluctance to lose a good day's work in order to attend to his political duties. When her lecture is ended and her object is attained, Fritz expresses honest admiration and surprise over her volubility:[1] "I have never before in all my life heard you talk so much politics as you have just now, mother. I did not think you had it in you to hold forth so!"

In "Kleider machen Leute," "Der Schmied seines Glückes," and "Das verlorene Lachen" experience is again strongly emphasized, largely the experience of the disappointment of more or less vain and foolish hopes. Through failure to attain vain and false ideals the way is opened for true and genuine idealism. In "Kleider machen Leute," "Die missbrauchten Liebesbriefe" and "Dietegen" it is in each case a pure and noble passion which purges the mind and heart of its ephemeral

[1] IV, p. 216.

potes and brings a potentially good and noble character to its full realization and development.

But Keller by no means deprecates a more formal academic program. He himself continually regretted the early interruption of his academic career. In the passages from the letters quoted above, he lays stress upon the fact that Heinrich was early deprived of regular school training, nor was his parental guidance all that could have been desired. What this latter could be, he shows in "Frau Amrain"; what a more formal program could accomplish, he indicates, in rather general terms to be sure, in the "Züricher Novellen."

Herr Jacques is another of those problematical characters into whom Keller wrote a good deal of his own youthful character and experience. He presents the same disproportion between ambition and intellectual capacity as Heinrich. In his youthful, pedantic way, he would fain be a genius, and he is very much distressed by his incapacity to realize his ambition. But Keller does not submit him to the severe and tedious discipline of Heinrich or Pankraz. Not all experience need necessarily be one's own. Jacques is going to learn vicariously through the experiences of others. The schoolmaster in this case is his godfather. He does not lay out for his pupil an elaborate program of studies, but chooses his material to meet the special and immediate needs of each situation as it arises in much the same manner as Frau Amrain gently leads her son into those experiences he most immediately needs. When Keller's opportunity came in 1848 to fill up some of the gaps in his own academic training, he turned first of all to the study of history:[1] "It was the names of the two historians, Ludwig Häusser and Friedrich Christoph Schlosser, that attracted him from the distance."[2] In the case of Jacques, the author takes for granted the ordinary, preliminary school studies, and only touches upon them incidentally in the opening pages of the book. A little more history, as imparted

[1] Baechtold I, p. 328.

[2] Among Keller's notes for the Salander novels, Baechtold gives the following: "Arnold's knowledge of history sustains him and keeps his outlook open." (Baechtold III, p. 641.) In dealing with Arnold's education in "Martin Salander," a good deal of prominence is given to the study of history.

by the sympathetic and tactful godfather, is now introduced to fill in certain gaps in the earlier school program.

Jacques, through the story of "Hadlaub," is shown how real genius develops. Hadlaub starts out with no vain and lofty ambitions; in the beginning he is an honest, efficient, and hardworking clerk and copyist. Life's experience awakens the slumbering poet in him, and because he has been industrious and faithful in his daily task, he has acquired the technic and the knowledge necessary to give the poetic in him adequate expression.

Jacques, after imbibing this story, succumbs to the folly of an attempted literal imitation of the model. His mentor again interferes, but again with admirable tact. Only when Jacques himself opens the way by asking for imformation as to the later history of the House of Menasse does he relate the story of the fool of Manegg. This degenerate scion of a noble house had played out the rôle of the would-be genius quite in the spirit in which Jacques had begun it. The effect is described as follows:[1] "But Jacques had become extraordinarily monosyllabic and thoughtful. Nor did he ask for further explanations or elucidations, as he had done on the previous occasion when the godfather had told him the story of Hadlaub. The significant way in which the old gentleman had dwelt upon the disease of wanting to be what one is not had not escaped him, and he was still a little worried about the 'Athens of Switzerland'. His patron noted the reflective embarrassment well enough, but he refrained from disturbing him in it."

Jacques now gives up his spurious imitation of Hadlaub. To reward him for his renunciation, his mentor gives him a large portfolio of copper-plates of the pictures of the Sistine Chapel and the stanze of the Vatican:[2] "He was to accustom his eye to the sight of true greatness, and learn to behold the sublime without at once thinking of himself over it." But the godfather notices that the genius-cult is still giving his pupil trouble. On the principle of making education as much

[1] VI, p. 146.
[2] VI, p. 147.

as possible a part of real life, he meets the difficulty by setting his pupil an humble, tho useful task. In the faithful performance of this, he not only does a permanently useful piece of work, but at the same time he gains an insight into the true sphere and usefulness of genuine originality, which is best characterized in the godfather's own words:[1] "Master Jacques, you once bemoaned the extinction of those human beings whom one is in the habit of calling original characters.[2] This lament is justified in so far as such men, whom in daily life we call original characters, are, and have always been of rare occurrence. If with their eccentricity there is combined an all-round proficiency, charm of personality and a spontaneous and native wit, they exercise upon their temporary environment, and often out beyond their immediate surroundings, an illuminating and warming influence that is denied to many a real genius, and their experiences are prone to shape themselves into robust or charming adventures." As an example of such a one, the godfather cites Solomon Landolt, to whose biography, as written by one of his admirers, he had some interesting material to add. It is this somewhat illegible manuscript which Jacques is to copy carefully, and at the same time he is to learn some interesting and helpful episodes in the life of this original character.

The godfather's task as educator is finished now, but not so the education of Jacques. The great danger of the formal program in education, no matter how well means are adapted to ends, is, the product itself may become too formal and academic. This danger must be guarded against by constant contact with actual life. An example of this is Jacques' trip to Rome in the rôle of the benevolent Maecenas, and his consequent disappointment and disillusionment regarding his favorite protégé. Instead of finding a serious artist, laboriously occupied in working out his artistic ideals, he arrives in the very midst of a very merry Bohemian wedding celebration. His protégé is about to marry the washerwoman's daughter whom he has seriously compromised. The dis-

[1] VI, pp. 147, 148.

[2] Cf. the expression: "He is quite a character!"

illusioned Jacques must make the best of it, and becomes the godfather of the lively young product of the affair. The spirit in which his own godfather is depicted as receiving the unpleasant news is an implication that he should not try too hard to mold the details of other people's lives to conform to his own special ideals; but he should do what he could, and then cheerfully make the best of things as they develop, whatever they may be. Reinhart in "Das Sinngedicht" also must have his academic studies supplemented by actual contact with life before he becomes a whole man.

With regard to the things to be taught, the actual school program, Keller insists upon, not a miscellaneous collection of more or less disassociated facts for future reference, but in the main, upon the things which are related more or less immediately to the actual life and actual needs of the learner. These are to be presented to him when the actual occasion for their need is well within sight:[1] "It is a question whether many a branch of study, even in its elements, should not be begun only then when one is in a position to make its exalted purpose clear and impressive." The discussion of this question is omitted in this particular connection in the later version of the book, but not because Keller had changed his mind about it. The same principle has already been noted in dealing with Fritz Amrain and Jacques, and it also comes up for discussion in "Martin Salander." The ex-schoolmaster, Salander, after his first return from Brazil, takes his family for a walk in the woods, and in a perfectly natural way, he proceeds to tell them something of the New World across the seas from which he has just returned:[2] "He also tested the children as to whether they could name here and there a flowering plant, or the bird whose note had just been heard. But they did not know anything, and he said to his wife: 'That's just it; the children are left too much to themselves.' 'But my dear husband,' she answered, 'throughout the whole year the children associate with a hundred others, and the walls of their schoolrooms are covered with pictures, birds

[1] "Der grüne Heinrich, erste Fassung." Vol. I, p. 227.
[2] VIII, pp. 63, 64.

among the rest which they know by name.' " He finds the same knowledge of words and ignorance of the actual facts with regard to their study of geography and history:[1] " 'I have read that a sort of local knowledge (Heimatkunde) has recently been introduced into the schools; how about it? What district lies yonder?' They had not learned as yet; only the oldest named the one in which they lived, the Borough of Münsterburg, and she also knew that there were twelve such boroughs. 'Very well! At an earlier time these were called domains, still earlier, bailiwicks, formerly manors and shires.' He outlined one of these, tracing out with his fore-finger a considerable extent of the horizon. The historical associations began to awaken and suggested one another until the present grew out of them, and everything seemed to enhance the actual land still more to him."

To these dissertations he attaches, again in a perfectly natural way, some simple, but wholesome observations, with a view to arousing in the children pride and love for their native land, and tries to lay in their minds the foundations for an intelligent and potent patriotism; for all this instruction must again have its ultimate result in character as well as in intellectual equipment. The acquiring of true knowledge does not consist in the mere learning of words, and knowledge is dead and useless that is not immediately related to life.

Later on Salander in his enthusiastic political activity pays special attention to educational matters. He himself now falls a victim to what Keller considered the fallacy of trying to make education too much a preparation, rather than a life. He outlines to his wife a very elaborate educational program, which would keep every youth in the land in the schools at the expense of the state up to his twentieth year. Marie, in a somewhat satirical mood, objects:[2] "But who is to help the poorer peasants to do their field-work, who is to provide food for the young fellows? Or are you going to give them pay until they are twenty years old and then know

[1] VIII, p. 69.
[2] VIII, p. 217.

everything, only not how to work, with the exception, of course, of the hand-made table and bench?"[1]

This objection to a too exclusively preparatory program is fully in accord with the earlier Pestalozzian program of vocational training, as outlined in "Lienhard und Gertrud," and as actually practised by Pestalozzi in his schools. The pupils are given what they actually need when they need it, and when they can put it to practical use. But in all this, Pestalozzi is much more immediately specific than Keller. He also emphasizes character as an end in education, but with his system it was to be developed through the manner in which the work was accomplished. With Keller character development comes first, in order that the actual life-work may be more honestly and effectively attacked. The actual specific training of the pupil comes mainly with the life-work itself:[2] "That for which a man has an aptitude he can already perform up to a certain degree from the beginning without having made any special effort to learn it beforehand, or at least without having had any great difficulty in the learning. That which, in its acquisition, causes him trouble from the very beginning, and in which progress is unsatisfactory and difficult does not lie within his province. . . . That the real learning begins only there where the school stops and the question of style arises, is another matter."

This was written in 1876 after this theory had been tested in the life of Keller himself with very satisfactory results. In 1861 he had been given the office of Cantonal Clerk in spite of the fact that he had no formal legal or secretarial training whatever. From the beginning he had acquitted himself in his new sphere in a manner which fully vindicated his supporters in having given him the appointment over the heads of applicants who were better equipped technically, and all dissatisfaction with the appointment was effectively answered, if not wholly silenced. Adolf Frey quotes the Federal Chancellor Schiez as having paid Keller the high tribute of being the

[1] Martin had included a certain amount of manual training in his elaborate program.
[2] Nach. Sch., pp. 12, 13.

best and most precise Cantonal Clerk of the whole of Switzerland.[1]

What Keller thought of mere vocational training as the whole or dominating element of education is best illustrated in a certain passage of "Der Schmied seines Glückes." Litumlei sends his adopted son, John Kabys, into the world to complete his own education and also to observe the methods of education in vogue in the different countries he visits. The knowledge thus gained is to be applied in the education of the as yet unborn scions of the newly-founded Litumlei family, for the perpetuation of which the adopted son had assumed the responsibility. John has a very good time in the world and forgets all about his educational commission until it is almost time to return. He happens to be visiting his native Seldwyla just then and makes a hurried inspection of the educational institutions he finds there. He finds that the shrewd and practical people have discovered a new and excellent industrial institution. They are making governesses of all their young girls with a view to sending them abroad to earn money in this capacity. The wise and the foolish, the robust and the sickly, all are subjected to this special training for special careers:[2] "Just as trout may be prepared in various ways, boiled, or baked, or fried in lard and so forth, so these good girls were given either a more positively religious, or more worldly training; were equipped more either for languages, or for music; for aristocratic, or more plebeian families. It all depended upon the part of the world for which they were intended and from which the demand came." In this training, principle counts for nothing, material advantage and efficiency for everything: "A Seldwylian could play the rôle of the most irreconcilable enemy of the church and at the same time have his daughters, who were intended for England, trained in prayer and Sabbath-keeping. Another who raved in public about the noble wife of Stauffacher, the household glory of free Switzerland, had banished his five or six daughters to the steppes of Russia or some other inhospitable region, where they languished in far-off despondency.

[1] "Erinnerungen an Gottfried Keller," pp. 78, 79.
[2] V, pp. 94, 95.

The main thing was, that the honest burghers might provide the poor creatures as soon as possible with passport and umbrella, pack them off, and have a good time on the wages sent home."

Mere vocational efficiency, according to Keller, is not sufficient to meet the exigencies of a complex social life. The three comb-makers of another of the Seldwyla stories are all experts at their trade; for the ordinary humdrum of daily existence they are fully equipped. They even have an external righteousness after a fashion. No one can accuse them of irregularities of personal conduct, or of infringements upon the rights of their neighbors. But their morality is a mere external formula. At bottom they are not even wicked, merely without character. All their actions are calculated, nothing in their morality is spontaneous, and when the crisis comes, it fails them miserably. As soon as life thrusts them off the beaten track, their little system goes to pieces.

The two prosperous peasants in "Romeo und Julia" certainly understood their business. They too have their external system of right, but at heart they are unprincipled rascals. Not only is their lack of character disastrous to themselves, in spite of their efficiency and outward moral uprightness, but it proves the undoing of their guiltless children.

At the same time, Keller did not deprecate professional and vocational efficiency. In a conversation between Salander and his wife, she with her practical good sense expresses the regret that they had not educated their daughters for some calling through which they might have had not only the means of independence, but some real vital interest in life to save them from the evils of too much mental idleness:[1] "What I want to say is this, if the girls had not had so much leisure and freedom, they would hardly have hatched out the vexatious adventure."

Nor should the chief aim in education be mere preparation for the so-called higher walks of life. This has already been touched upon in dealing with the "Strebertum" that Keller so vigorously condemned. Another instance may be cited

[1] VIII, p. 109.

here. Salander is relating some of his experiences as schoolmaster to his friend Wigart:[1] "I was already looking forward with pleasure to future days when I hoped to meet many a farmer who would have me to thank for it if he could cast up an account correctly, survey a piece of land, read his newspaper with better understanding and read a book in French on occasion, and all this without taking his hand off the plow. But I have not lived to see it; for the boys all vanished from before my eyes, and buried themselves in all sorts of offices. None of them did I ever see again in the fields and in the sunshine." Instead of aspiring to be enlightened farmers, whose intellectual training should guarantee them worldly prosperity and independence and the respectability of efficiency in their calling, his boys chose to occupy obscure clerical positions where their rural traditions never could come to real fruition.

The aim of education in Keller's system, in so far as it is a system, is the development of the individual for his own sake, then also for the sake of the community in which he lives. The immediate object of education is man, and the ultimate, mankind. When Heinrich at last finds himself, he has become a man at one with himself, capable of a firm and beautiful friendship, and engaged in an occupation in which he is a benefit to his community. And thus it is with all of them, Strabinski, Fritz Amrain, Jacques, Hadlaub, Arnold Salander; whatever the divers experiences may be through which these reach their full stature as men, the product is in each case, broadly speaking, the same: a man who has within himself the sources of his own well-being and happiness as well as that of those most intimately associated with him, and who, in his public or communal activities, is an asset to the state and to mankind in general. To this ultimate object all means and systems must be intelligently adapted and subordinated.

The story of Meretlein shows pretty clearly what Keller thought of unintelligent and tactless religious instruction of children. In the passages quoted from his letters regarding

[1] VIII, p. 18.

the philosophy of "Der grüne Heinrich" he likewise touches upon the havoc false religiosity can work in a sensitive temperament given to brooding and much thinking. But he by no means wholly rejected religion as a topic of study for the young. He very clearly expresses his views on this subject in an article in the *Zürcher Intelligenzblatt* of August 27, 1861. A government measure had been under consideration to make church attendance and religious instruction obligatory for children below the age of twelve. The attempt failed. Keller approves, but he goes on to say that he considers the obligatory religious instruction between the ages of twelve and sixteen a good thing: "What is lost during this period in independence and freedom of thought does not amount to much. On the other hand, it would be a most serious matter for the citizen to be ignorant as to that which the state really stands for in clerical matters, while hundreds of times cases would occur when he would, nevertheless, have to presume to an opinion about it. At sixteen each is free to govern himself according to the impressions he has received. The mild religious impressions of youth, I dare say, have never yet hurt anybody, and the most violent iconoclast, if asked on his conscience for the truth, would scarcely wish to do away with them. Where these impressions are not mild, kindly and comforting, let the church worry about it; that is her affair."

In the eleventh and twelfth chapters of "Der grüne Heinrich,"[1] where the same subject is treated, the author's attitude is largely the same: due regard for the opinions officially professed by the major portion of the community, and a respectful willingness to become informed as to the things one is supposed at least officially to believe, even if one can not individually accept everything. It is the duty of every citizen to have a reasonable knowledge of these things since they are such an integral part in his civic and social environment. But the moral effect of this instruction and the final mental attitude toward religious matters in general must be left to each individual. There must be no coercion one way or the other.

[1] Of the 1879 version. Also in the corresponding part of the older version.

Keller recognizes the great value of first-hand experience in education. But "Der grüne Heinrich" is an illustration of how wasteful such an undirected or autodidactic process can be, and how unsatisfactory are its results in many respects. Nowhere does Keller expressly or emphatically lay down the dogma that the education of the individual in general is the duty of the state. He takes this for granted for the most part. But he more than implies that provision must be made in the program not only for the child of ordinary and normal temperament; the abnormal and eccentric must receive special treatment. To try to force all into the same mold is disastrous, as in the case of Meretlein. At the same time not all failures in life can be ascribed to defects of education.

The purpose of educational training should not necessarily consist in preparation for the higher and more aristocratic spheres. This ideal in education belongs to the undemocratic "Strebertum" so abhorrent to Keller. To this he opposes the larger ideal of the nobility of all spheres of human activity, when properly comprehended and honestly practised. To Keller human character in the broader sense is far more vital as an ideal in education than vocational efficiency. His ideal in the last analysis would cover the other and narrower one of vocationalism. The ultimate consideration must not be the individual merely as an individual, but as an integral part of the community in which he lives. The state and human society in general must get in return for the opportunity given, the man and citizen, not only capable of taking care of himself, but equipped morally and mentally to be of service to mankind.

CHAPTER IV

Artistic Ideals

For the romanticist, art was a solace for the unpleasantness and imperfection of reality. Young Germany saw in art a tool to be used in the services of social and political propagandism. Realism would enlist art in the services of science in revealing mankind more fully to itself. Keller's ideal in art is neither any one of these exclusively, nor a combination, merely, of all, or any two of them.

In "Hadlaub" the godfather shows Jacques that genius is inherent. It does not come through constant striving after it, or imitation of it in others. In the case of Hadlaub, it develops out of, and feeds upon the day's work in which he is engaged. When the time comes, and he feels the need of song, he finds he can express his emotions not only through the poetic product of others, but that he himself can produce.

Keller came into his poetic heritage in somewhat similar fashion, as has been shown in an earlier chapter. But just as in the case of the ordinary citizen, so also here, man does not exist for himself alone, but for mankind. The poet also has a mission to humanity other than that of merely finding an outlet for his own emotions in song. He must serve mankind with his art. Nor must this service merely take the form of direct participation in the political struggles of the day. This is only a part of the poet's mission. In a sketch for a poem noted in his diary under date of August 8, 1843, he says:[1] "The propagandists are mistaken when they believe that the poetic art was created only for action and for political and reformatory purposes. The poet should raise his voice for the people in distress and need; but afterwards his art should again be the flower-garden for life's recreation."

[1] Baechtold I, pp. 214, 215.

A sonnet, "Herwegh,"[1] of the 1846 collection expresses this same idea: the poet must not only raise his voice for the people in time of stress, but must also interpret the poetry of ordinary existence through his song. Keller seems to have foreseen, in a measure, the limitations of Herwegh as revealed in his subsequent career. Without the powerful stimulus of the stormy forties, his muse failed him in the quieter times which followed. He did not have the sympathetic poetic vision which enabled Keller to see poetry even in the seemingly commonplace. The same idea of the dual nature of the poet's mission is expressed in a poem to Freiligrath "on his entrance into Switzerland in the Spring of 1845." It was published in the 1846 collection, but is much too long to be quoted here.

This idealizing of things as they are, as Keller understood and practised it, need not necessarily be an offence against realism even of the most exacting kind. As a matter of fact, it is wholly in accord with nature's own practice:[2] "But the same God who gave poetry to man, also gave him, without doubt, the artistic impulse and the necessity for perfection. If He loves symmetry and fragrance even in the flower which He Himself created, why should He not also love them in the works of man?" Symmetry and fragrance are no less realistic in literature than in nature itself. It is a wholly one-sided and unreal realism which can see only the repulsive and sordid in life.

Nor need the glorification of life find its sole expression in the detached moonshine of romanticism. The poet's dream can attach itself to the seemingly most prosaic things in contemporary life and draw its romance from it. Justinus Kerner had published a poem in 1845 in the *Morgenblatt* called "Under the Sky," in which he laments this noisy age of steam. Soon the poet's last realm of dreams, the heavens, will also be closed to him:[3]

> Let me drink in to satiation
> The summer drowsiness of noon;
> Perfected dreams of aviation
> May desecrate the stillness soon!

[1] The text, with slight variations, is the same as that of IX, p. 123.
[2] Nach. Sch., p. 157.
[3] The poem is reprinted, X, pp. 128, 129.

The lark then spurns the tainted air,
As now the Rhine the salmon shuns;
And thro' the songless sky will fare
Britannia's sullen, silent sons.

The blotted heavens I scrutinize:
What sudden dark'ning can this be?
Behold! a train of merchandize,
That passes 'twixt the sun and me.

If rain falls from a cloudless sky,
And wildly I the rainbow seek,
It is not water meets my eye,
'Tis drippings from an oil-cask's leak!

Keller replies:[1] nothing can drive true poetry from the souls of men; in fact, far from rapidly approaching its decline, the poet's day has just begun to dawn:

For Poesie is born in us,
And She knows neither Here nor There.
Yea! if I'm hurled to Tartarus,
To very Hell She'll with me fare!

We're not yet in such sorry plight
Meanwhile upon this earth of ours;
A Voice from out the fading night
Calls forth undreamed poetic Powers!

All this mechanical progress, Keller goes on to say, will only give the poets and mankind in general all the more time to indulge in the song and joy of life. The "unhallowed dream" of man's future conquest of the air ends in Keller's version in the following joyous vision:

In happy ages yet unborn,
Of aircraft, piled with Grecian wine,
High up beyond the redd'ning morn,
The steersman's place would I decline?

As vine-crown'd through the air I'd soar,
Of Bacchus e'er the devotee,
A brimming cup I'd slowly pour
Into the wide, deserted sea!

[1] X, pp. 129, 130.

Here is already in the 1846 collection, Keller's tendency to democratize his fondness for indulging in romantic dreaming and to apply it to the service of mankind in the broadest sense. It still further displays itself in the 1851 collection. Even the sordid and repulsive can have its poetic essence.

"Der Taugenichts" of the 1851 collection, the first stanza of which has already been quoted in another connection, is a further example of this. So also "Abendregen" of the same collection. Both are included in the collected works with some alterations in the text.

But with this poetic conception of life, the poet must not lose sight of life's actual distress, or use this distress for his selfish artistic purposes merely. To make mankind realize the poetry in its ordinary life, even in its suffering, is one thing; to exploit suffering merely to create a beautiful, artistic effect, is heartless cruelty and not true art. This is brought out in the poem called in the 1851 collection, "Türkischer Brauch," and in the collected works, "Der Schöngeist." Such "Schöngeisterei" Keller despises.

In the "Prolog zur Schillerfeier in Bern, 1859," he further emphasizes the value of the esthetic in the ordinary affairs of mankind. This is also the spirit in which "Das Fähnlein der sieben Aufrechten" was written. Regarding it, Keller wrote to Berthold Auerbach in June, 1860:[1]

"At the same time, I consider it the duty of a poet not only to glorify the past, but to intensify and beautify the present, the seeds of the future, just enough so that the people can still believe: thus we are, and so it goes. If this is done with a certain degree of sympathetic irony that frees the material of its false pathos, I believe the people will finally in very deed and outwardly become what they in their naïveté already believe themselves to be, and in their innermost tendencies already are. In short, just as one shows pregnant women beautiful pictures, one must always show the ever-pregnant basic national stock something better than it already is. Then one can also censure it the more severely where it needs to be censured. . . .

[1] Baechtold II, pp. 465-467.

In any case, this characteristic insistence on the part of the people to recognize themselves in the poetic delineations without feeling themselves flattered by them encourages me to hope that they will also be impelled through these delineations to a partial realization in fact. And so it was with my seven old champions, and one and the other of them will say when he comes to read the *Almanac*: 'Good Gracious! That's just the way it was! The rascal!' However, they did not speak by far as I have them speak. But the germ of it was in them, and they would at least understand it and be receptive to it."

As a didacticist, Keller belongs in a sense to the group which would have to include Pestalozzi, Jeremias Gotthelf, and Auerbach. Among these he is closest to Gotthelf. Keller might easily have written "Elsi, die seltsame Magd," while "Der Wahltag," in its uncloaked didacticism and its dialogue style, could very nearly have been Gotthelf's work. All four of them take their material directly out of the life of the people, but there is a very fundamental difference between the way Keller treats this material and the use the others make of it. Pestalozzi, Gotthelf, and even Auerbach write with the didactic purpose always very definitely in mind: to improve the people through material which is familiar to them. They preach at the people and, in striving for their effects, often exaggerate and become unreal. Pestalozzi frequently becomes little less than ridiculous. Keller's ideal is to reveal and interpret the people to themselves and heighten in them the consciousness of their own true worth and latent possibilities. In his idealizing, as indicated in the passages quoted above, he, however, never becomes unreal. And furthermore, through his art, he interprets his people, not only to themselves, but to the world at large. It is this idealism, firmly rooted, however, in the real and circumstantial, combined with Keller's peculiar gift of humor, which gives even such obviously didactic works as "Frau Regel Amrain" their artistic charm, and the romantic fantasies of the "Sieben Legenden" the same illusion of reality as the most realistic of his works.

In Keller's philosophy art must grow naturally out of life itself and in turn react vitally upon it in terms of service of humanity. This service must not merely be practical in its bearing in the narrower sense, but must express itself in a helpful interpretation of the esthetics of every phase of human life.

CONCLUSION

In speaking of "Martin Salander," Adolf Frey says:[1] "He (Keller) spoke with a good deal of dissatisfaction of the book, and had many a bad half-hour while getting it on paper, especially the latter parts. 'What have you against the book anyway?' I asked. 'You are unjust.'—'What I have against it? It is not beautiful! It is not beautiful! There is too little poetry in it!'" The book dealt too exclusively with realities, pleasant and otherwise, without sufficient emphasis upon the essence of these truths and their latent possibilities. In the projected sequel with Arnold, the son, as hero, this defect was to be corrected. It was highly characteristic of Keller's indestructible optimism that, even in his old age, he should thus place his hope for the future in the younger generation. For the typical pessimist, the coming generation is usually even worse than the present. Keller preserves to the last something of the romanticism of his youth. In the propaganda of Young Germany his tendency to dream took root in actuality. The fight for political and social liberation and the prospect which it opened up at that time occupied a large share in the young poet's fancy. This inspiration of battle and dream of final victory he shared in common with other young poets of radical and revolutionary tendencies. But when the heat of the contest was over, these young poets for the most part found their chief and only source of inspiration gone, and failed to fulfil the promise of their earlier productions. What for Herwegh, and to a much lesser extent to be sure for Freiligrath, was the end, was for Keller only the beginning. He no longer found it necessary to go to the remote past, or to distant lands, or into the vague realms of mysticism to satisfy his romantic tendency. His imaginative fancy did not need the stimulus of great social and political

[1] *Deutsche Rundschau*, Vol. LXIX, p. 109.

upheavals, nor did the better social and political conditions in Switzerland which came as a result of the revision of the constitution in 1848 satisfy his democratic program. For him a people was more than a political organization and a nation greater than its written constitution. The future, rather than the past, became the field for his romanticism. In most of his themes we are confronted, not with the finished individual or corporate product, but with one in the making.

In his choice of material Keller is, in the main, a realist. He is furthermore a realist in the convincing consistency with which he proceeds to develop the problem before him. The solution grows naturally out of the material presented. In all his works he reveals a conception of life in which are combined and blended a sobered and enlightened democracy with sane and sound idealism.

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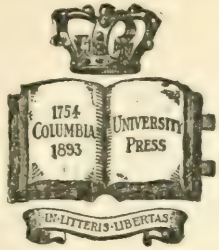

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